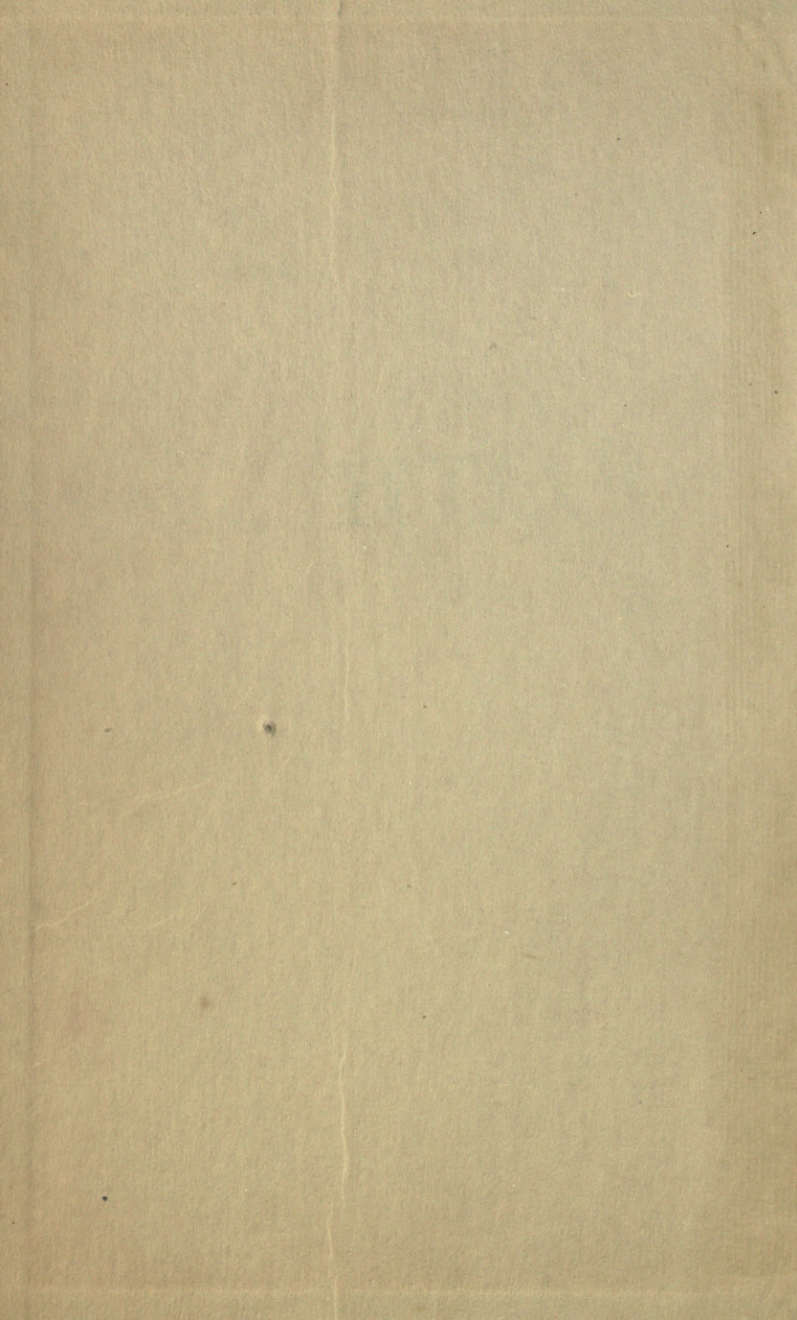


THE DAY OF FAITH

Arthur Somers Roche



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THE DAY IN FAITH

THE DAY OF FAITH

To
Roy
from
Frank & Edna

Xmas 1924

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The mob leader strikes Hendricks down.
Winter Hall.

(*The Day of Faith*)

(*A Goldwyn Picture*)

THE DAY OF FAITH

BY ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

AUTHOR OF

*"The Eyes of the Blind," "Find the Woman,"
"Ransom," "Uneasy Street," etc.*



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THE DAY OF FAITH

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TO THE MEMORY OF MY FATHER
JAMES JEFFREY ROCHE

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THE DAY OF FAITH

CHAPTER I

THE prisoner stared at his captors. They were five, and he was one.

"What you goin' to do with me, gents?" he asked. The whine of the professional crook, common to mendicants also, was in his voice. Divested of his mask, which he had worn upon his entrance, he was the stubbly-bearded, beady-eyed, loose-lipped kind of man who is terrifying to women, but cringes before men.

The youngest man, the one who from the brightly lighted dining room had heard the sound upon the porch outside, and had tiptoed around the house and engaged the intruder, laughed.

"Do with you? Why, we're going to give you a cold supper, then a nice warm bed, and in the morning we're going to raise a purse for you, and give you a good job, with easy hours and a large salary, and elect you to the country club—why," and his hard young voice, still a trifle breathless from the struggle outside, took on a tone of mock surprise, "what did you think we were going to do with you?"

The burglar shuffled his feet. His shrewd eyes shifted from face to face. Elderly men, all of them, save for the man who had spoken, he seemed to read mercy in the face of none.

"Well," he said impudently, "it looks like a fair enough program. How soon did you say that I ate?"

After all, he had his code. As long as whining might serve, he would whine with the best of them. But when all hope was lost, it was his thief's duty to show bravado. The youngest man turned to the oldest of the group.

"Well, Mr. Hendricks, it isn't often that theory and practice shake hands with each other. What do you think now?"

There was triumph in his voice. Also, there was that tinge of contempt which youth always feels for age, especially when youth is practical and age seems visionary.

Hendricks shrugged his shoulders. They were bowed shoulders, and the face above them was wrinkled as though with many troubles. But the wide mouth was generous; the bony nose above it told of impulsiveness as well as strength, and the deep-set, tired-seeming eyes were as soft as those of a sweet-natured child.

"Why, I don't think, Jackson, that I've had any reason to change my mind."

"No?" Jackson's voice was jeering. "You invite us here to-night to discuss prison-reform plans. You ask me, as district attorney of Leland County, to advocate measures of leniency toward criminals. And in the middle of our talk, I hear a burglar outside, capture him, drag him in here, and you tell me that you haven't changed your mind."

"I do," smiled Hendricks. "The fact that some one tried to rob me doesn't alter the fact that criminals are badly treated, does it? Sam, you don't argue with juries this way, do you?"

Jackson colored; he blustered slightly. "I'll bet you, Mr. Hendricks, that when we come to try this man, we'll find out that he's done time before, that he's a professional

crook. And yet you'd advocate gentleness toward him!"

"And toward ourselves," said Hendricks. He looked pityingly at their captive. "Treat him fairly, justly, generously," he said, his voice slightly rising, "and he'll be a different man."

"You bet I will," exclaimed the burglar. His impudence fell away from him like a discarded garment. Hope was not lost, and he would still whine with the best of them. He didn't know what it was all about; he only knew that he had misread the face of the man they called Hendricks. Mercy was there! "Why," he said, "I ain't never had no chance at all."

Young Jackson grinned. "You mean that the cruel, brutal police interrupt you when you're thieving. That it?"

The small eyes of the burglar flashed hatred for a moment. But he dropped them quickly; his attitude was all humility.

Another man spoke; there was a hint of mirth in his voice.

"Better ring for the police, Jackson," he said. He looked at Hendricks. "It isn't evidence against your arguments, Hendricks, old man," he said affectionately. "Only — theories run up against facts, and — why, even you, old man, wouldn't argue that there's any possibility of reforming a rat like this. Jail's the only place for him."

The young district attorney, grinning broadly, started for the door. But Hendricks called him back.

"Just a minute, Jackson." He faced the last speaker. "I don't think, Kelly, that you have quite followed me. I don't advocate reforming criminals any more than I advocate reforming ourselves, who help criminals to remain what they are."

Kelly's red face creased in innumerable merry wrinkles.

"I suppose, Hendricks," he said, "that Jackson, or Rosenberg, or Capelli, or you, or myself, had something to do with this yegg's career? Eh? That what you're driving at? I suppose that some one of us, somehow or other, drove him to his life of crime, as the newspapers would term it? Eh? That what you mean?"

Hendricks shook his head. "I won't say that any of us are directly responsible for his past. But his future — that's something different. If we send him to prison now, we *are* responsible."

"And if we don't send him? What then?" demanded Jackson hotly. "We let him go and continue his sweet career — and I don't suppose that we'd be responsible for the next crime he tried — and got away with? You really mean that?"

"I mean this," said Hendricks. "I mean that if we saw this man as a perfect human being — if all of us did — he would inevitably see us as perfect — crime would be abolished and ——"

"The millennium would be here," interrupted Capelli. His dark, Italian face expressed the hugest contempt. He turned to Rosenberg. The latter's swarthy face was a study in bewilderment. "What do you think, Rosie?" demanded Capelli.

"Think?" Rosenberg's deep voice was almost a bellow. "Think? I think that I am a busy man; that we are all busy men. Mr. Hendricks invites us here, three of the leading business men of Leland, to talk a lot of damn' nonsense about crooks. Then he wants us to let a burglar go free. Then he tells us that we should look upon his burglar as a perfect human being! Think? I think that he's crazy, and that we are just as crazy if we listen to him. That's what I think."

Hendricks laughed. "Fair enough, Rosie! Just for that, the next time you want the Leland National Bank

to extend a note for you, do you know what I'm going to do? "

"Sure I do," replied the Jew, smiling. "You will extend the note. Any time you let my opinions interfere with your fairness, you will be a different man, Bland Hendricks." He waved a pudgy hand at Jackson. "Telephone for the police," he said.

"Wait a bit, Jackson," said the banker. "After all — this is my house. This man had not entered it. He was on the veranda outside when we heard him. He's committed no crime."

"He wore a mask — his intent was clear. I think," said Jackson, "that I can make a jury believe that he didn't come here to pay a social call."

"What you are able to make juries believe has no bearing on the situation," said Hendricks. And into his voice, usually drawling and mild, had come that hint of stubbornness which his firm chin indicated. "A complaint must be made. I refuse to make one."

"I'll make it," snapped Jackson. His own aggressive chin was thrust forward.

"Trespass is an offense of little gravity, I take it," said Hendricks. "If the chief sufferer by such an offense refuses to press the charge, I think that the net result would be a waste of your time, Jackson, my boy."

The younger man, his face red and belligerent, stared at the older. "You want me to let him go, then?"

"I insist upon it," said Hendricks gravely.

The others remained silent. After all, there was truth in what Hendricks said. The man had not committed burglary. He had neither "broken" nor "entered." That his intention was only too obvious didn't matter. He could not be charged with burglary, and even a trespass case would break down if Hendricks refused to appear against him.

"But be reasonable, Mr. Hendricks," pleaded Jackson. "The man is dangerous."

Hendricks shook his head. "Men are dangerous only because we choose to believe so." He turned to the captive. "You may go," he said.

For a moment, dazed, incredulous, the burglar stared. Then he slowly backed toward the door, eyeing young Jackson fearfully. But the young district attorney, with a disdainful shrug, turned his back. The burglar gained the door. He drew a long breath, wheeled and shot through it. Three minutes later, almost a quarter of a mile away, he stopped for breath. There had been no pursuit; it hadn't been a trick, a little game which his erstwhile captors had played for their own amusement. He was free! And "Montreal Sammy" began to take more than a passing interest in his surroundings.

For one failure did not mean that Montreal Sammy would not try again. He *must* try again. He had not one single cent to his name. He had left Chicago upon a freight train that lost its charm when a brakeman discovered him. Not choice, but stern necessity, had made Montreal Sammy detrain at Leland. The yeggman had a contempt for what he denominated as hick villages. They afforded him little or no play for that imaginative quality so essential to success in his profession. It took a certain amount of nerve to invade the precincts of a home or office with felonious intent. And imagination, of a sort, was needful wherewith to create the nerve. One had to be able to visualize cash, jewels, articles of rarity and corresponding value, lying around within easy grasp. One could hardly imagine them in the buildings of a little town like Leland.

Furthermore, the opportunities for a get-away were not so many in hick villages. Strangers were more liable to attract the intrusive notice of the inhabitants. All in all,

a place like Leland aroused the genuine distaste of Montreal Sammy. Artists, writers, musicians, — these are not the only ones who find that the big city affords them the greatest opportunity.

But bad luck, in the shape of a uniformed policeman, had discovered Sammy, at the moment slightly careless, at work in Chicago. His hasty flight had necessitated the loss of the tools of his trade. Only his mask, of all that valuable burglar's kit, remained to him. He had felt, upon being kicked off the freight train at Leland, that perhaps he might have done better by remaining in the city on Lake Michigan. But New York, after all, despite his "monicker" — bestowed upon him by admiring friends because of a trick that he had pulled in the Canadian metropolis — was his home. To remain in Chicago, broke, without even the tools of his profession, meant disaster. In New York there were friends.

And, invading the first prosperous-looking home that he had seen, he had been caught, like any raw amateur. He hadn't even invaded it! He'd been pounced upon as he crouched upon the veranda, dragged into the house. The humiliation angered him.

Now that he had been permitted to depart, like a schoolboy caught stealing apples, fear began to leave him, and anger took its place. Also, contemptuous wonderment crept into his mind. What sort of a boob was this guy that they called Hendricks? Flooey in the dome. Nothing less. Still he, Montreal Sammy, should worry about the banker's mental health. Let his friends and family and business associates attend to that. Hendricks saw him as perfect, eh? Well, he would return the compliment; he saw Hendricks as a perfect nut. Fair enough. He chuckled at his own wit.

But the chuckle lasted only a moment. This young guy, Jackson, was district attorney, according to the con-

versation that Montreal Sammy had heard. That meant, even if Jackson didn't prosecute Montreal Sammy for burglary, that the police of this town would be instructed to arrest for vagrancy any suspicious-looking person.

He *must* get out of town! And riding the rods of freight trains had lost its savor. He must buy a ticket and board a passenger train. And tickets cost money. So did food, for that matter, and Montreal Sammy, who had not eaten for twenty-four hours or more, was famished.

Of course, it was risky, but, — needs must. Keeping as much in the shadows as he could — not very hard on the tree-lined streets of Leland — the yeggman looked hard for a profitable field for his endeavors. There wasn't much choice. It was a small town, and it had not yet reached that stage of commercial and social development which declares itself by palatial homes. These houses which he was passing now were mostly frame houses; but some of them were large, with well-kept lawns and trimmed hedges. He paused before one.

Insinuating himself through a gap in the hedge, he surveyed the house carefully. He noted how neat was the drive; the garage was big enough for at least three cars; and there were servants' quarters overhead. Nothing grand, he told himself, but — substantial. There ought to be some loose jack lying around. Every one probably in bed, too. There was a light on the top floor, and a faint, subdued glow from one of the downstairs rooms. Just the sort of light people left burning all night. All the other rooms, so far as he could tell, were dark. There were lights in the rooms above the garage, but they didn't worry him. He wouldn't make the same mistake twice in the same night. No one would hear him this time.

The moon was shining a bit too brilliantly for him to dash across the lawn, but a cloud was near it. He waited,

twenty minutes perhaps, for the planet to be obscured. Then he raced across the lawn, its thick carpet rendering his progress noiseless.

By the veranda steps he paused. He'd blundered into what might have been a ten- or twenty-year prison term less than an hour ago. Only the most amazing luck in the world, the presence of a maniac in the house, had saved him from jail. For he knew that if he were once arrested and identified, there were so many charges hanging over his head that Hendricks' failure to prosecute would not have saved him from conviction on those other charges. No; he'd not press his luck. He'd wait until he was sure.

But finally he was sure. Not a sound came from the house before which he crouched. He tested the veranda steps. No loose board was going to announce his presence a second time on the same night. Slowly, quietly, he mounted the steps. He reached the broad front door, and his fingers touched its knob. It was locked, and he stepped away from it. Without tools it would have been difficult to unlock. But there were windows, plenty of them.

He passed the one through which the light burned dimly. Odd that the inmates kept a night light in one of the rooms instead of in the hall. But it was none of his business. He listened outside this faintly lighted room. Not a sound came through the glass and curtain.

Ten feet beyond he paused again. He tried the window of the darkened room, and his stubby-bearded features relaxed from the moment's tension in a grin. Another moment and, still treading as lightly, despite his stocky bulk, as any wild animal cautiously stalking its prey, he was in the house.

CHAPTER II

It would have been hard for the citizenry of Leland to have decided who was the most popular and best-beloved person in the town. Inevitably, though, their choice would have borne the surname of Maynard. Which Maynard, Marley or his daughter Jane? There the vote would have split.

It was true that Marley Maynard had been the pioneer manufacturer in the state to adopt a profit-sharing plan whereby his employees benefited; it was true that he had built and equipped a hospital which he had presented to the town; it was also true that he had once declined a diplomatic post in order, as the town knew, that he might remain in Leland to combat certain proposed legislation that would have worked harm to the community. It was further a matter of common knowledge that Marley Maynard might have had millions, instead of a few hundreds of thousands, had he chosen to enter the combination instead of remaining an independent manufacturer of carpenters' tools. He had remained outside, the town knew, because his entrance would have seriously affected the lot of the common workman. For these things the town honored and loved him.

But Jane Maynard had refused a duke! That was a matter that captured Leland's imagination. The metropolitan papers had made much of the nobleman's wooing of the untitled American girl. That Jane had publicly denied the alleged proposal made no difference. The town knew that it was so; and, as a matter of fact, it was so.

She had been duly presented at the Court of St. James

and had won a social success in London that made her the envy of women who possessed a hundred times her wealth. Her father's philanthropies, his reputation as a business man of incorruptible ideals, his standing in the State and national councils of the political party to which he belonged, — these, added to an ancestry that included men notable in American history, had served to fix Jane's social position on the highest plane, at home and abroad.

Yet, when her mother's death had cut short her European triumphs, Jane had not taken up her residence with any of the numerous family connections in New York City. Leland adored her for that. The small town is proud of its natives who achieve triumphs abroad; but it loves the famous native who sticks to the small town, who makes it his home. It satisfies the vanity of the rest of the citizenry who, unable to dwell in the metropolis, frequently quell their fires of dissatisfaction by announcing their devotion to the home town.

But Jane did more than satisfy their vanity; believing it her duty to live with her father, she took as active an interest in the affairs of the town as Marley Maynard himself. No movement for the betterment of conditions in Leland but found Jane in its forefront. She had inherited her father's sound judgment and business instinct.

But from her mother she had inherited a beauty, a charm of manner, a grace of movement, that made one sorry for the duke. With hair so brown that at first glance one often mistook it for black; with the gentlest of big gray eyes; with a straight nose that ended above a short upper lip that was slightly curved; with a mouth neither large nor small but sweetly formed; with a round chin dimpled on one side, and with a figure that was slim and straight and gently rounded, she was lovely enough, Leland thought, to have won the fancy of a king, much less a mere duke.

Leland loved her, and she loved the home town. But more than the town, more than any social career, more than anything else in the world, she loved her father. For occasionally there exists between father and daughter an intimacy sweeter than anything else in the world. Marley Maynard, sturdy, erect, as capable at fifty-five of feats of strength as he had been at thirty-five, was the most delightful companion in the world, so Jane thought. His brain, ever active, was as young as her own. He was her confidant, her cavalier. And when he was wont to chide her, to tell her that she mustn't grow up an old maid, she would laugh at him and tell him that she was waiting for some one as fine as himself.

So, when Marley Maynard was thrown from his horse, dragged fifty yards and brought home unconscious, Jane Maynard almost collapsed beneath her fear. She would have collapsed but for the fact that her father constantly demanded her presence. During those first few days of delirium he had called her name over and over again. And she had not left his side.

And now the period of convalescence had set in. With it Maynard had developed a strain of irritability hitherto foreign to his nature. In all his manhood he had not spent two days in a sick bed, and now he had been in bed three weeks, with a prospect, so the eminent New York specialist had been compelled to tell him, of remaining there at least another month.

"And," the specialist had said quietly to Jane, "he will never be really well again. Don't be alarmed," he added quickly, as the girl's face whitened. "I do not mean that he is in serious danger. What I do mean is that he must be extremely cautious. His heart—he has been too active. Splendidly muscled, he has thought that the inner organisms were as powerful. They never are. He has demanded too much of them. But, with care and caution,

he will live many years. But just now — any shock — would be extremely dangerous. So,” and he smiled, “if he insists that you be his chief nurse — humor him.”

Jane had smiled wanly. “Humor him? I’ll do anything in the world.”

So, since Maynard, with that new irritability that illness and convalescence had brought to him, declared that the presence of a nurse in the room made sleep impossible, Jane spent each night with him. And, because it had been dangerous to carry him another inch when he had been brought home after the accident, one of the living rooms downstairs had been turned into a bedroom. Here, in a great chair, Jane sat each night, while her father slept fitfully.

Maynard, with that selfishness that sickness brings to the most generous souls, did not realize that his exactions were wearing upon his daughter, and Jane never thought about it. This was her beloved father, and any little service that she could perform for him was a joy, not a task.

Upstairs slept the trained nurse. During the day Maynard would tolerate her; but not at night. When he woke up, he wanted Jane’s soft hand to touch his forehead; he wanted her voice, always merry no matter how much she worried, to cheer him.

And it was into this room that Montreal Sammy crept.

He had not dared to light a match; the sudden flare might alarm some one. He carried no flashlight; that was now at Chicago police headquarters, with the rest of his tools. He must work in the dark. And darkness is not conducive to the best selection of easily pawnable jewels; one cannot find loose cash in the gloom.

So cautiously he had passed through the room which he had first entered, into a wide hall. Directly opposite him was a slightly opened door, through which came

faintly that light which had puzzled him. He crept across the hall; he listened for fully five minutes, but not a sound came from the room. Probably, he decided, some one had forgotten to turn off the light; the room was probably vacant. And so, crouched upon the floor, he put his head slowly around the edge of the door to make that investigation which caution demanded.

He took in the situation quickly. Some one sick — man or woman he could not tell — and beside the bed in which the patient lay sat a young girl. The light of the shaded night lamp fell upon her features. Montreal Sammy, not immune to feminine charms, nodded appreciatively. A peach, nothing less. But her good looks or lack of them were unimportant. What really counted for something in his life was the fact that she wore an expensive-seeming ring upon one of the fingers of her right hand. That could be pawned in New York for something. If that diamond were real — and it certainly sparkled most realistically in the dim light — and Montreal Sammy could get away with it, life would throw off the drab cloak that at present it wore.

More immediately vital, too, was the purse that lay upon the table near her. It was a fairly plump purse; Montreal Sammy could imagine its contents. Ten dollars would take him to New York; he could catch the midnight train. But not if a hue and cry were raised. And there was, of course, a telephone in this house, through which that hue and cry might have its initiative.

The burglar withdrew his head; he crept across the hall and into the darkened room from which he had just come. There he pondered the situation. And it was an unpleasant one.

He congratulated himself now that he had had forethought enough not to turn on the lights. That would have immediately attracted the attention of the watcher

by the sick bed. She would have screamed, aroused any one who might be in the lighted room upstairs. It was quite probable, considering that a person was ill, that the quarters over the garage did not hold all the servants employed in this home. One or more of them might be upstairs, ready to answer a scream.

Of course, his way of retreat was open, but still — He wanted that diamond; he shook as though with a chill, as cupidity and fear fought within him. Fear won.

For Montreal Sammy had never been a man of violence. He had made his living by the exercise of craft; to rob from the person was not his forte. He would not attempt it now. The girl might scream, might grapple with him, hold him until help came. Montreal Sammy knew that his muscles were flabby; even a young girl might give him battle that he could not overcome. No; he would not try to take that diamond ring.

But her purse! He must have it. And it was useless, as well as dangerous, he decided, to seek elsewhere in the house in the darkness that must encompass him. And then he heard footsteps.

For a moment he stood poised, ready to race across the room, dive through the window, and flee the neighborhood. Then, as he waited, he heard the footsteps progress along the hall and mount the stairs. He made instant decision. The girl had probably gone upstairs for something or other; would return in a few minutes; but — all he wanted was a half-minute. He would steal into that room, lift the purse from the table.

Halfway up the stairs Jane stopped. She had gone to replenish the supply of a heart stimulant which her father was supposed to take several times during the night. The nurse, who prepared all things for Jane's night watching, had been forgetful. But suddenly she remembered that it was she, not the nurse, who had been

forgetful. For the nurse had told her that the large bottle, from which she refilled the smaller one that now was empty, was in a closet off the sick room.

Montreal Sammy had wanted but half a minute. But Jane reëntered the room less than fifteen seconds after she left it. And the yeggman, who had estimated the height of the stairs and had been certain that he was safe, and because he was certain had not listened as carefully as he might otherwise have done, turned from the table to meet her blazing eyes.

She was gentle of soul; but the gentlest soul has its moments of righteous wrath. Jane had one now, for she knew that excitement would be dangerous to the loved one in the sick bed. Yet, despite her wrath, inspired by fear lest her father wake, its inspiration, its source, was of sufficient gravity to make her master her anger.

She put a finger instantly upon her lips, and with her other hand motioned toward the bed. Montreal Sammy got her meaning at once. She feared to arouse that figure on the bed, a figure which he had discovered, in a swift glance, was masculine, but gray-haired, and perhaps therefore not to be feared. A sick, old man. Montreal Sammy felt courageous. And this girl, whom he had been afraid might attempt to detain him, — she was scared to death, too.

A thought came to him. He'd been discovered; doubtless an alarm would at once be raised, as soon as he had left the house. One might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb. If she were afraid to make a noise —

"Gimme the ring," he said. His hoarse whisper was barely audible, yet Jane shivered with fright lest Maynard awake. Immediately she stripped the jewel from her hand; she held it out toward the burglar. And then Maynard spoke.

He had been on the edge of wakefulness for several

minutes. That faint, hoarse whisper of Montreal Sammy precipitated him over the edge. And he was the sort of person that awakes in full possession of the faculties.

There was light enough in the room for him to see that a man was there; and the light fell upon the diamond that Jane extended. He took in the situation at a glance.

"Why, you damn' scoundrel," he cried.

And then he leaped from the bed. He took two forward steps, and then his legs bent beneath him; with an inarticulate murmur he pitched forward upon his face.

Montreal Sammy had turned, his fists clenched. A sick old man was some one that he did not fear to meet in battle. But as Maynard fell, the burglar turned. He leaped toward Jane.

"Gimme that ring," he yelled.

There exists between persons of the same blood, sometimes, something that science has not yet explained. Perhaps it is simply that they are branches of the same trunk, and that when one of them is lopped off, the trunk feels the blow and communicates its feeling to the other branches.

Maynard had fallen unconscious to the floor. Despite the dictum of the physician, there was no reason for Jane to believe that death had come to him. And yet she *knew*. And, knowing, grief for the moment gave way to rage, the rage of one who has seen its best-loved slain.

Montreal Sammy had thought that he had but to reach for the ring. He did so, but he did not touch it. For Jane's hand drove straight forward; it struck the lips of Montreal Sammy, and the diamond cut into them. And as he stepped back, cursing, Jane threw herself upon him.

For only a moment she held him; for now the burglar fought with the desperation of fear. She was almost as strong as he, but the collar which she had seized came

away in her hand. Montreal Sammy leaped backward, then to one side, and then dashed through the door, across the hall, and out the window of the darkened room. But the scream of Jane did more than arouse the sleeping nurse upstairs. It reached the ears of two men walking briskly down the street.

They paused. They looked inquiringly at each other.

"That's from Maynard's house, Jackson," said the older man.

Jackson made no reply. He leaped the hedge and ran across the lawn. So it was that just as Montreal Sammy jumped from the veranda to the ground, Jackson arrived there. The burglar dodged, and Jackson dived, bringing his man to ground with an old-fashioned football tackle, a tackle that had made him famous a dozen years ago.

He rose, dragging his victim with him, his fist clenched, prepared to knock his man out if there were need. But there was not; Montreal Sammy, the breath knocked from him by his fall, had no fight in him. Jackson turned to his companion, a heavy-set man who had not been able to leap the hedge and had come the more roundabout way of the driveway.

"Hold him, Kelly," he said, "while I go in ——"

Kelly gripped both wrists of the burglar. "I've got him," he said.

Jackson turned toward the house; as he crossed the veranda, the door was thrown open. Jane saw him and recognized him.

"Mr. Jackson — a burglar — he killed — father —"

From upstairs the nurse came running down the hall. She heard Jane's words; she ran into the sick room. The two in the hall heard a faint cry come from her, a cry that bore out Jane's statement.

The young girl shuddered. Jackson put forward his

hand as though to catch her. But she waved it away; she was strong, strong with the most powerful motive in the world save one, — hate. For she had seen the shadowy figures on the lawn below.

“Did you catch him?” she asked.

Jackson nodded. “We have him, Miss Maynard.”

From her lips came an incoherent cry; it might have been a prayer for her father; it might have been an expression of horrified grief; but to Jackson it sounded like a cry of triumph, a cry torn from the depths of a hate-filled heart. Then, when she knew that the burglar was captured, and not before, did she yield to the demands of nature. She fainted in Jackson’s arms.

Ten minutes later, when servants were busied in the house of death, when Montreal Sammy had been bundled off in charge of an officer, and Jane was lying in bed under the ministration of the nurse, Jackson turned to Kelly. His hard young voice was never more bitter.

“I hope,” he said, “that Bland Hendricks will be satisfied with his night’s work. If he’d let me jail that scoundrel ——”

“Don’t,” said Kelly. “Bland will feel worse than we do.”

“He ought to,” said Jackson viciously. He swore fiercely. “If I never win another case, I’ll win this one. I’ll send that man to the chair if it’s the last act.”

Kelly started. “Murder?” he asked.

“I’ll make it murder,” said Jackson.

CHAPTER III

MARLEY MAYNARD died on Monday night. On Thursday, his body having lain in state for twenty-four hours in the Leland City Hall, guarded by State troops sent by the Governor of New York to pay this last honor, he was buried. On Friday a special grand jury, hastily impanelled at the request of District Attorney Samuel Jackson, found an indictment for murder against Montreal Sammy. It was a thin charge; Montreal Sammy had carried no lethal weapon; he had not touched Marley Maynard. It was true that one who in the execution of a lesser crime commits a greater is liable to the penalty for that greater, but Montreal Sammy had not committed that greater. Maynard had died through shock.

"What you givin' me?" demanded the burglar, when a jailer brought him the news that he would have to face trial for his life. "Why," he cried, "they can't try me for murder!"

The jailer grinned. "They can't, hey? Well, my friend, they're *goin'* to!"

"They're railroadin' me," whined Sammy.

"You said it, feller," agreed the jailer. "They're a-goin' to shove you through as fast as the law allows. And when the jury and the judge get through with you, there's a nice warm chair up at Sing Sing, and they're a-goin' to strap you in it and turn on the juice, and the coal shortage won't worry you no more."

Ordinarily, despite his profession, the jailer was a kindly enough man. He had a wife and three children, and all four of them considered him the best-natured man

in the world. But there was no kindliness in Leland when people thought of Marley Maynard. Only the fact that Jackson himself had pleaded with the crowd that had gathered, on Tuesday night, before the jail doors had saved Montreal Sammy from a lynching.

Jackson had pleaded with all his heart. And he had made a promise: he would demand that the prisoner be placed on trial for murder, and he would do all in his power to send the scoundrel to the chair.

With this the irate citizenry was content. Hundreds of them waited outside the courthouse on Friday, and when it became known that the grand jury had found its indictment, cheers greeted the news. Montreal Sammy in his cell, heard the murmur of the throng. And his jailer gave him no opportunity to wonder as to its reason.

Hopeless as any trapped rat, the burglar waited for his trial. He had no money; he could employ no attorney; and when, on Monday, he was arraigned and the judge assigned him counsel, the lawyer's manner was so perfunctory that Montreal Sammy gave up the fight. He didn't have a rat's chance, he told himself.

But on Tuesday morning the jailer, sneering, brought to his cell a most distinguished-seeming gentleman. Sammy could not believe his ears when the visitor gave his name. It was that of New York's most famous criminal lawyer.

"Cheer up," said his visitor. "They can't convict you on this murder charge. And if they do it will be overruled in the higher courts. Not a chance. Now — tell me your story."

"Who sent you here?" demanded the burglar. He hadn't a friend on earth who would finance the retention of John Cartlery.

Sammy could have taken no appeal, could not have been saved.

Why? Why had Bland Hendricks, her father's friend, done this thing?

When she announced her intention of visiting the bank, an aunt, come hastily from New York to help her niece through the time of sorrow, protested. But Jane waved the protest aside. She was strong, buoyed up by the powerful passion of hate. She drove her own car to the bank, stopped it, with no uncertainty of movement, close to the curb, and entered the building.

The conversational hum created by clients and employees died away as she entered. She had never been so beautiful; the black that she wore enhanced her beauty; the crimson that anger had given to her cheeks made her seem more alive, more vital, than she had ever seemed before. For perhaps there had been in her expression, hitherto, something of that coldness, that reserve, that goes with persons whose characters are as yet untouched by emotion. But it was gone now. Her eyes held a fiery light; even her walk, always graceful, seemed to have a new sinuosity. Hate, perhaps, had advanced her from girlhood into womanhood.

She asked for Hendricks. He came to her when, coldly, she refused to enter his private office. There were deeper lines than ever in his kindly face; his mouth, so oddly sweet for a man, was sad. He advanced toward her, his hands outstretched.

"My dear Jane!" he exclaimed.

The girl stared at him; her mouth, that had been straight, twisted in curves that were almost ugly. For a moment she met his eyes, then her own dropped to his extended hands; they lifted again and met his gaze. She made no attempt to accept his proffered handclasp. Instead, she folded her hands together.

Hendricks colored slightly. "You are angry? You blame me for what I have done?"

Tellers, cashier, messengers, depositors, — they numbered almost a score, and every one of them stared at the two.

"Blame you?" Though she fought for self-control, her voice rose slightly. "I *despise* you! A friend of my father's, you shield his murderer, you buy his immunity ——"

"Jane!" Into Hendricks' ever-kindly voice crept sternness. "You don't know what you are saying. The man is not a murderer ——"

"He is! Who are you to put yourself above my real friends, my father's real friends? Oh!" Her hands clenched, lifted, then dropped before her. Guided by overwhelming anger, she had come down here with no knowledge of what she was to say; she only knew that she wanted this man to know her hatred for him. And she could find no words wherewith to express it. She felt baffled, humiliated. Here before her was a man who shielded, saved from death the man who was responsible for her father's death. Love for that dear father should lend her eloquence, and yet she was dumb. She could express herself only in an action which she knew was so anti-climatic as to be almost childish. She walked abruptly away from the banker and spoke to the cashier, staring through his steel grating at her.

"What is my balance?" she asked. "I wish to withdraw my account."

A man at the receiving teller's window heard her words. On sudden impulse, he joined her side.

"Tell me mine, too," he said loudly. "I want to withdraw mine."

Twenty minutes later, all Leland knew that every man who considered himself a friend of Marley Maynard, who

felt any loyalty toward that dead man, and who also had an account in Bland Hendricks' bank, was withdrawing his money from the institution. At one-thirty the directors of the bank met in hurried council; at two it was announced that the resignation of Hendricks as president of the bank had been demanded and given.

Ten minutes later Bland Hendricks emerged from the bank. The street was thronged with people who had known him all his life. They were his friends, his associates. And yet the roar of hatred, of contempt, with which they greeted him was as venomous, as merciless as, during the war, a convicted traitor might have met.

He was a brave man, yet for a moment he shrank before them. Then, on impulse, he lifted his hand. The cries ceased. Curiosity held the crowd.

"My friends," he asked, "what have I done?"

Clamor shook the air, yet before his still uplifted hand it died away again.

"I have only tried," he said, "to see that an unfortunate man received justice. In a moment of insane hatred this whole community has wished to see a man punished for a deed that he did not commit, a deed that he did not intend."

"How do you know he didn't?" cried some one.

"I don't believe it," answered Hendricks.

"You let him go when he was caught once," cried the speaker. He had pushed himself forward now until he confronted Hendricks. It was the red-faced Kelly, his face more crimson now than ever. "You talked a lot of damn' rot about perfection—look what your perfect man did! He murdered Marley Maynard, that's what he did! And he won't go to the chair, because of you! I suppose that you still believe this crook, this yeggman, this murderer, is a perfect human being?"

Into the last three words Kelly hurled all the sarcasm

he could. The crowd roared in angry mirth at his witticism. Then, silenced, they waited for Hendricks' reply. Slowly it came.

"I do believe it," he said. "I do firmly believe it. And if the rest of you — if all of us would see him thus, then there could be no doubt."

He paused, then began to descend the steps. But Kelly barred his way.

"You've said what you believe, Hendricks," he said. "I'll tell you what I believe: that you are a damn' maniac, who ought to be confined in an asylum, and by the lord, I'm one man who's goin' to try to put you there!"

Over Hendricks' face spread a smile of inexpressible sadness.

"Do something else, Kelly, my friend," he pleaded. "Try to believe me."

"Believe you?" Kelly struck down the extended hand. "If you weren't an insane man, I'd help to ride you on a rail." He glared for a moment at Hendricks, then spat upon the ground and strode back through the crowd.

For a moment Hendricks stared after him, his face grave, ineffably sad. For Kelly was one of his oldest friends; Kelly had listened gravely to his pleas for the better treatment of those convicted of crime; Kelly, until the capture on Hendricks' veranda of Montreal Sammy, had seemed to agree with him. Kelly had even, with a good-humored smile, listened while Hendricks had, at various times, proclaimed his faith that all men were perfect, and that the world had but to recognize this fact to achieve complete happiness. And now Kelly, one of his oldest and closest friends, had spurned him, had struck down his extended hand.

The crowd gave way for him; not one there but knew of the old intimacy of Kelly and Hendricks; it seemed,

at the moment, that all that could be done to Hendricks had been done.

But Kelly had used a phrase that stuck in men's memories. He had spoken of riding Hendricks on a rail. The phrase was repeated; it went beyond the crowd who had heard it; in higher and lower social circles, in the back rooms of dives and in drawing-rooms, the phrase was uttered.

To ride Bland Hendricks on a rail! More! To tar and feather him — business men and bar-room loafers; lawyers, doctors, merchants — the psychology of the mob is little known. Why do men, in company, do things that they would scorn to do alone? Why, under the spell of passion, does the last vestige of civilization slough off men's souls? It does not do to say that mobs are made up of outlaws, real or potential. For if that be true, then all of us are outlaws in our hearts. For there lives no one who has not felt, at some time or other, the urge of the mob spirit, to destroy, to injure, even to kill!

Who first named the hour and the rendezvous could never have been told. For the first man to make a concrete suggestion of Kelly's phrase probably was unaware that he had made it, probably thought that some one else had done so. Perhaps, indeed, a dozen men said it at once. For the will was in a hundred hearts, and what are words but the will expressed?

And so, shortly after dark, in the square opposite the courthouse, men gathered. Self-elected leaders addressed them, urged them on to a deed to which, passion-ruled, they needed scant entreaty. The police looked on in apathy. The so-called better classes made no protest; their representatives were in that mob. And suddenly, tiring of talk, as by one common impulse they moved away from the square, out toward the house where Hendricks sat in lonely silence.

The vanguard of the mob passed the Maynard home. A servant learned their intention. He told Jane's aunt who, horror-stricken, came to her.

"They're going to ride Bland Hendricks on a rail?" echoed the girl.

Her aunt nodded. "Perhaps you could stop them, Jane."

The girl smiled. "Stop them? Perhaps I could! But I won't. I'm going to watch them — to help them if they want!"

CHAPTER IV

WHEN Bland Hendricks was five years old, the Civil War was beginning to stir in the womb of misunderstanding. His father, a pioneer agitator against slavery, had had something to do with the famous Underground Railway by which fugitive blacks were brought safely to the free States. And on that fifth birthday a strange little boy had been a guest. He had remained a member of the Hendricks household for sixty years. Three years older than Hendricks, he worshiped the little white boy whom it was his destiny to serve. He took the Hendricks name; although, in manhood, many a sable-hued charmer cast languishing glances his way, he was blind to blandishment. His father and mother had been slaves; he, Isaac Hendricks, was a freeman; and he could dream no higher dream than to serve Bland Hendricks.

Through all the years he had never been away from his employer, whom he called his master. In boyhood a playfellow and protector; in youth a body servant; and in manhood director of the domestic affairs of the Hendricks ménage. Bland Hendricks was his god.

As for Hendricks, he held for Isaac an affection that years had strengthened. When the one girl, back in the eighties, had died, and Hendricks had known that life henceforth was for him a period of waiting, it was Isaac who received his confidences; Isaac who, oddly enough, had given him the comfort that his equals could not offer. Between the two was that understanding that six decades of companionship created.

That he imposed upon the good nature of his master,

that he was dishonest in minor matters, and that the truth was something that he held too sacredly to abuse by frequent use, made no difference in that understanding. Bland Hendricks did not expect the product of the jungle to possess the ethical sense that it has taken the white man hundreds of centuries to attain. And he had for the black man's superstitions no contempt, only a kindly and amused tolerance.

So, his early dinner ended, he smiled when Isaac, who had shown an increasing nervousness as he served the meal, said:

"I got a feelin', Mist' Bland, 'at you an' me oughta git outa this town to-night. I had a c'munication, Mist' Bland."

His "communications," as he called them, were, he was wont to assert, direct statements made to him by persons long dead but with whom he maintained spiritual and verbal intercourse.

"So?" said Hendricks. His smile, though tolerant, was wearied. He had spent four hours in his study, suffering those tortures that can be endured only by a proud soul who has been denied and scorned by all whom he has held dear. Kelly — those others in the bank and on the street — One of them — just one — might have called, might have telephoned. Ostracism, to one who is companionable, has always been socially inclined, holds horror.

"Yassuh, Mist' Bland. Shall I ordeh the car?"

Hendricks frowned slightly. Isaac was so eager; his lips trembled; as he spoke, he brushed drops of sweat from his forehead. Well, Isaac was getting old. He, Bland Hendricks, was almost seventy, and Isaac was some years older. Perhaps he had been wrong in tolerating the old Negro's superstitions.

"You behave yourself, Isaac," he said sternly.

"Yassuh." The black man bowed humbly and shuffled out of the dining room, leaving Hendricks to consume his cigar and drink his coffee alone. But half an hour later Isaac came, almost running, into the study, whither Hendricks had gone.

"Mist' Bland, I got anotheh c'munication. I know wheah Bennett" — he mentioned Hendricks' chauffeur — "is spendin' the evenin'. Shall I 'phone him?"

Hendricks stared at his servant. Old Isaac's woolly pate was shaking; his teeth were chattering; his ebon face had taken on a shade of gray.

"Isaac," he demanded, "what's the matter with you? Of course you won't telephone Bennett. He's entitled to his day off without interruption. You'd better go to bed, Isaac."

"Bed? Huh! An' dat mob drag me outa it, an' maybe say, 'Niggehs makes good bonfires, anyway, and whiles we got fuel handy, why look around?' No, suh! Mist' Bland, let's you an' me hustle right outa heah whiles' de hustlin's good."

Hendricks stared. "What on earth are you talking about, Isaac?"

"I'm talkin'," said the black man, "about what I didn't want to talk; about de mob what's on its way up heah — or will be soon — and is goin' to ride you on a rail and Lawd knows what else."

Hendricks leaped to his feet. His kindly mouth stiffened; his stubborn chin suddenly became pugnacious; the tired eyes flashed. Then he sank back into his chair. Isaac was sprung from an imaginative race; he had heard garbled reports of the scene in and outside the bank this afternoon; he had become frightened. For, with all his loyalty and devotion, Isaac was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. Now Hendricks laughed.

"Isaac, you're an old coward. Mob? What on earth put such an idea into your head?"

"I tell you, Mist' Bland, it ain't no idea! It's de God's truth." In his terror he forgot all about the alleged spiritual source of his "communications." He went on eagerly, "I tell you, Mist' Bland, when I was downtown marketin' dis aftehnoon I heerd 'em talk. And whiles' you was at dinneh, dat mulatto what works in de co'thouse telephones me and tells what fixin' foh to happen, and jes' now he rings me up again, and says de mob is formin' and talkin' tar and feathehs an' ridin' you on a rail. Foh God's sake, Mist' Bland, let's git out."

There was no doubting the man. Whether or not what he said was true, he believed it. And Hendricks believed it, too! He knew what the temper of the Leland citizenry was; he knew how easily, even in a northern town, the mob spirit can be evoked. That he had lived decently and fairly in this town, injuring no one, so far as he knew, in his sixty-odd years, would make no difference.

For a moment he was tempted to fly. Then he thought of summoning friends. He smiled at that last thought. Had he any friends left in all of Leland? And then came still another thought, one that made his lips unconsciously grim.

He had professed a certain faith. What was flight, what was the calling of friends to his side, but a surrender of that faith? Did he believe it? Did he, in his heart of hearts, believe that all men were perfect, incapable, if their true selves were revealed, of injuring one another, or had he given lip service only to an ideal?

And suddenly into his eyes flashed that light which men call insane; the light that must have burned in the eyes of the martyrs, dimming by its brilliance the flames that crept into their garments, along their limbs.

He looked at Isaac and shook his head.

"Isaac," he said, "it isn't possible."

The black man looked at his employer. In his eyes also burned a light: the light of panic, the panic that conquers all courage, the panic that is close enough to the heart of the white man, nerved as he is by centuries of repression of instinctive fears, but that is still part of the black man's very spirit.

"Mist' Bland, you's crazy."

"Perhaps I am," smiled Hendricks. "But you — Isaac, don't you stay here. You run along downtown somewhere —"

Pride came to the black man's heart. "Mist' Bland, you think I'm goin' run away from you? I'll die first."

He turned and shuffled out of the room; and as he crossed the threshold, he heard the first cry of the mob. In the hall beyond he stopped; his ears pricked up as the ears of an animal do. He half-turned, held out a hand toward the room which he had left; his mouth opened, then closed without speech. Fear — blind, unreasoning fear — seized him and did with him what she willed. As the vanguard of the mob turned into the Hendricks driveway, old Isaac was crossing the ground in the rear of the house. When the first fist pounded upon the front door, Isaac was scaling the rear fence, fleeing the most terrible thing in the world — the mob.

Hendricks, in his study, heard the cries, the steps upon the veranda, the pounding fists that disdained the bell. Then, because he was not the sort to wait for danger, he walked from the study down the hall.

Danger? If he conceded its existence, did he not create it? He glanced over his shoulder. He knew that Isaac had fled. Sixty years of intimate acquaintance had informed him as to Isaac's courage. Well, bless his old heart; he had a right to run. And he had paid his master a very subtle compliment in pretending to have received

spiritual warnings; he knew that Bland Hendricks would not accept anything else. The glow that consciousness of courage brings crept into his heart. Then he cast it from him. He was not courageous; he had knowledge; that was it. He knew that his fellow man would do him no injury; that was his courage; and he was smiling at his own vanity as he threw wide the door.

Mobs are cowardly. That is why a single man firm in his resolve to enforce the law can often subdue hundreds of angry rioters. If each member of the mob could stop to analyze his own thoughts, he would know that only the presence of his fellows gives him courage, that, were he alone, he would flee the scene of his contemplated crime.

Mobs respect courage. The single man who defies them always makes them pause. It may be that later, whipped to frenzy by their own passions, they crush the defiant one, but for the moment they always stop and give him heed.

So now, those leaders who had reached the Hendricks veranda gave way, retreated to the head of the steps, as Hendricks was framed in the doorway. The cries of the later comers, who had surged across the lawn, trampling the grass into mud, ceased as they looked upon the man in search of whom they had come.

The veranda light overhead fell full upon their quarry's face, and they saw that he smiled. Had there been the faintest suspicion of a sneer in that smile, they would have hurled themselves upon him at once. But a smile of calm confidence, of courage unassailed, was not what they had expected to find upon Hendricks' face.

"You wanted me?" asked Hendricks. His voice was calm, quiet, yet it carried to the farthest fringe of the mob. "Then won't you come in?" he invited them.

The leaders stared at one another. This calmness, this quiet confidence, this pleasant invitation to a crowd so

patently bent on violence, amazed them. Behind it must lurk some trick; they could not conceive that Hendricks held no fear. They had expected to find a man harassed by panic; had thought to drag him from beneath a bed, out from some dark closet whither he had fled.

They were suddenly like schoolboys standing before their teacher. The leaders stirred uneasily, shifted their weight from one foot to another.

"Come in," said Hendricks again. As he did so, he stepped to one side, with one hand gesturing toward the open door.

But now that pause, that moment of incertitude which brave confrontation causes in the mob, had passed. Already from the rear came cries.

"Grab him! Slug him!"

Two of the men of the veranda moved toward him. Hendricks lifted his hand. As, earlier to-day, on the steps of the bank, the crowd had listened, so silence came again upon this mob.

"My friends," said Hendricks, "what do you want?"

"You," came the answer from a score of voices.

He shrugged. "I am here," he said. "Take me."

He moved a step toward those nearest, his arms outstretched. On his face was still that pleasant smile, the smile, men felt, of a child.

The man closest to him shrank back; he could not have told why he did so, for Bland Hendricks was an old man, and he was young and vigorous.

"Do you know what we want?" he muttered. "Do you know what we're going to do to you?"

Slowly Hendricks shook his head. "I know what you think you want to do. But you can't do it."

"We can't, hey?" Before his confident advance, the lust for hurt died away in the speaker's heart. Yet he sneered. "Why can't we? Because we're perfect, hey?"

Hendricks nodded. "That is it," he said.

And as he spoke, he held out his hand. Had he not made that gesture, he might, as the man later said, have "got away with it." For some subtle mesmerism affected the man. He felt, for the moment, ashamed, sick, disgusted with himself. And the mob reflects always its leaders; had this man turned away, the mob would have turned away.

But the man had been wary, suspicious, feeling that some trick threatened him. Hendricks' courage was too incredible. So now he mistook the friendly gesture, the gesture of brotherhood, for one of menace. He struck down, as Kelly had struck down that afternoon, the extended hand.

The blow heated to the boiling point his suddenly and inexplicably cooled passions. It had the same effect upon the mob behind him.

"Slug him," they cried.

A stone hurtled through the air; it struck the wall behind Hendricks, rebounded and brought a sudden spurt of blood from his cheek. Dazed, he staggered back toward the open door.

"Grab him," cried some one.

And the leader of the mob leaped forward. His clenched fist smashed against the still-smiling mouth, and Hendricks went down. He arose to find himself in the midst of a swaying, shrieking, cursing throng. Hands tore at his clothing, thudded against his face and body. Conscious, he was yet unconscious; he didn't know what was happening, save that some gruesome nightmare held him in its clutches. His thoughts were jumbled, and what speech came from his lips was incoherent.

Like one asleep they dragged him down the veranda steps and across the lawn. On the sidewalk outside the once trim hedge, that now was crushed by the feet of

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hundreds, his captors paused. There, leaning from the driver's seat of her car, sat Jane Maynard.

She could not tell whether or not the bleeding man recognized her; yet, as hands fell away from his shoulders and for a moment the mob let him face the girl whom they believed he had so grievously injured, the light of understanding seemed to gleam in his eyes. He held out his hands toward her. Yet the gesture was neither threat nor plea. It seemed, strangely enough, to be almost a benediction.

"What'll we do with him, Miss Maynard?" cried a man.

Over the girl's face spread an expression strangely compounded of contempt and wrath.

"What you will," she cried. She leaned forward, holding herself in the car by a grip of her left hand upon the wheel. With her right she slapped the face of the dazed man before her.

From the mob's thousand-tongued throat came a roar of approval. She leaned back, threw in the clutch and raced down the street away from the crowd and its victim. She did not know that distance, or time, could not dull the roar of that monstrous thing, the mob. And had she known she would not have cared. The big gray eyes glinted hardly as she sped beneath electric road lamps; the generous mouth was drawn down in what was almost a snarl; the dimpled chin was thrust forward, and the parted lips exposed teeth that seemed cruel.

Behind her men lifted the dazed, bewildered thing that had been Bland Hendricks. They placed him aside a rail torn from a fence that the mob had passed. They elevated him upon their shoulders; they formed a singing procession and marched toward the outskirts of the town. Clods of earth, stones, sailed through the air, sometimes knocking the almost lifeless thing from its humiliating perch. But rough hands pushed him back.

With tar, hot from a cauldron, they coated his body, in one incomprehensible — considering what they had not been ashamed to do — moment of mercy refraining from stripping him, leaving his torn clothing upon his beaten body. Over the tar they cast feathers torn from a pillow. That pillow had been intended to soothe and comfort tired men. The rail had been intended to prevent passers-by from falling into a ravine and injuring themselves. The tar had been designed to make a sidewalk smooth for man. The things we create for service we use for destruction.

Then, suddenly, horror assailed the crowd. This almost lifeless thing, absurd, horrible, able to walk, able to use words, but walking blindly, speaking unintelligibly, — that had been a man, had been Bland Hendricks, the banker, respected of all Leland, the friend of every one, the enemy of no one!

Not merely did the mob tire of its cruel sport; it suddenly became ashamed of its brutal handiwork. And when a raging figure, uttering strange obscenities, its deadly fear of what it was doing making it the more dangerous, leaped with the abandon of desperation into the crowd, pushed from its path the white men who blocked the way, no blows were struck. They let him pass, let him throw his feeble old arms around the body of the master whom he had left in fear but to whom he returned, despite his fear.

Disintegrated, furtive, the mob melted away, leaving old Isaac to lead — to carry — toward home, a thing that seemed like some great awkward bird.

CHAPTER V

JANE's aunt was in the hall when the girl returned. An elderly spinster, neither love nor hate had ever burned fiercely in her heart, and so the actions engendered by those emotions were incomprehensible to her. Convention, custom,—these were her guiding stars. And Jane, through all these past few days, had disdained their guidance.

For Jane had not withdrawn into solitude after her father's funeral. Instead, she had feverishly awaited the indictment of Montreal Sammy; she had openly professed her hope that the burglar would pay the penalty of his entrance into the Maynard home in the electric chair. And to-day, when she had heard of Bland Hendricks' intervention in behalf of the prisoner, she had herself driven downtown, been leading woman in a scene at Hendrick's bank that outraged her aunt's sense of propriety.

Not that Miss Pauline Anderson, Jane's aunt, had not had an affection for her brother-in-law; had not felt, with the town of Leland, that Montreal Sammy was his murderer. She had understood Jane's wrath. But she had not understood, was incapable of understanding, the depths of that wrath, the volcano-like depths in which burned a flame that consumed all of those reserves of manner which to Miss Anderson were fully as important as morals.

There were certain things which women should leave to men. Public expostulation, whether that expostulation was verbal or physical, was one of those things. "If thy neighbor offend thee, cut his acquaintance: but never

raise thy voice." This might have been Miss Anderson's motto.

She was truly shocked when the servant had informed her of the forming of a mob and its intention toward Bland Hendricks. She had even gone so far as to suggest that Jane might stop the accomplishment of that aim. Yet, had Jane, in acceptance of the suggestion, announced her intention of preventing the assault upon Hendricks, Miss Anderson would have been torn between the desire to prevent an outrage and the wish to keep her niece away from any unconventional public appearance.

But, when Jane declared that she would *help* the mob — she was waiting when Jane, grim, white-faced, blazing-eyed, returned to the house.

"What did — they do?" she asked quaveringly.

Harshly, cruelly, Jane's laugh sounded.

"I didn't wait to see the finish," she said, "but the start was — satisfactory."

She laughed again. This time her voice broke, became shrill, changed from mirth into sudden sobs. She leaned against the wall of the hall, clutching at her throat, while her aunt, in frightened dismay, stared at her.

The sobbing shifted to mirth again. Loudly, shattering the silence that is always deeper in the house where death has recently been, peal after peal of shrill jubilation burst from her mouth. And then Miss Anderson understood.

She had been shocked, horrified; had considered Jane's attitude and actions nothing short of wicked; but Jane was her dear niece, who had undergone frightful strain. She put her arms about the hysterical girl, led her, suddenly docile, to her room, undressed her, gave her a drink containing a stiff dose of bromide, and, an hour later, left her, as she believed, sound asleep.

But Jane was not asleep. The bromide had soothed

her, but her own strong will had come to her rescue. Hysteria was something to which she had never yielded before, and, recognizing it, she conquered it.

She feigned sleep in order that she might be left alone. And now, lying in her bed, staring up at the ceiling, faintly illumined by moonlight that came through the opened window, she surrendered to mental review of the night. She went farther back; she reviewed the discovery of the burglar in the room, its tragic consequence. Oddly enough, she found that she looked upon Montreal Sammy almost with indifference. She did not know, yet, that hate is a more selfish mistress than love. One may love many, but hate few.

No; Montreal Sammy was a crawling, repulsive thing, but irresponsible. He had been made as he was. But Bland Hendricks was different. He had been born to things to which Montreal Sammy had never even dimly aspired. All that birth, tradition, position and money could do for Bland Hendricks they had done. And these things had not been able to give loyalty to a dead friend. Well, he was paying disloyalty's price now.

Suddenly she was restless; the impulse to hysteria had completely gone. She didn't want to scream, wished no soothing companionship, but could not lie still. She rose and walked to the window. There, in a chair, she sat, elbow upon the sill, chin cupped in her palm.

The moonlight, the stillness outside, were calming. Slowly her lips curled in a smile so sardonic as to change her. For a moment she had been almost languid, half-drugged by the moonlight, the bromide, and the strength of her will. But now she saw again the battered, reeling figure of Hendricks, saw his outstretched hands, felt her palm tingle as she slapped that bleeding face.

Without regret! So she thought. For her feeling was one of triumph, of revenge sated. She did not know that

she was not herself, that she had stilled hysteria, save for one brief moment, by the exercise of an extraordinary will-power, but that its poison, the venom of repressed emotion, had permeated her very being, and would make its presence felt.

And then she heard shuffling footsteps on the sidewalk beyond the lawn. Idly she turned her head. For a moment she thought that she was dreaming, for through a gap in the hedge she saw a feathered object, around whose middle was a supporting arm of a man. But the first object — was that a man?

She grasped at her throat, stifling an impulse to scream. Then, lips parted, eyes staring, she leaned through the window, gripping the sill with fingers that clung as though they were holding upon life itself.

For she knew! This was what she had done! She was of that rare breed which never seeks to shirk its responsibilities, which does not say, "I didn't realize; I didn't intend."

She had done this! Not the mob, but she, Jane Maynard! She didn't analyze her feelings; she only knew that where she had intended hurt, had rejoiced at seeing Hendricks suffering, this grotesquerie appalled and shocked her.

If the mob had killed him she would not — at the moment — have cared. But to turn this man, who was honestly proud, as she knew, of his position in the town, into a thing of mockery! This was different. Punishment, yes; humiliation — No! Had she known! To degrade him; to rob him of his semblance to humanity — this was to strike at his soul, not merely at his body.

To ruin him financially, to have him ostracized, to beat and bruise and cut and torture his body — these things she had been willing to have done; aye, had wanted to

have done. But his soul — that was for God, not for her, not for the people of Leland!

And it was the soul of Bland Hendricks that this mob had struck at. She knew that; she had the vision which informed her. And she had never dreamed — To play fair. Ah, when she rejoiced at a thousand striking at one: had that been playing fair? But that, in the ecstasy of her hate, was something that had not bothered her at the time, that would not bother her now.

That they would strike him again, that they would lead him around, a victim of their cruel amusement; she had known it, wished it to happen. But she had not visualized what riding on a rail, what tarring and feathering meant. Now she saw it in all its deadly, filthy brutality. To rob a man of his likeness to his brothers. Oh, it could be washed away from the body, but — the soul! Could the stain of that tar, the fluffiness of those feathers — could they be wiped from the soul of him?

To make him a subject of violence — yes. To make him a subject of shameful ridicule — no! This was her chaotic thought as she ran, in slippered feet and dressing gown, down the stairs. She did not know that she had been insane, that reason was slowly seeping its way back into her mind and soul. She thought that there were degrees in her hatred, that she rebelled because the mob had gone one degree farther than she had expected.

Outside, by the gap in the hedge, the victim and his rescuer had paused. Wrath, self-contempt, had endowed the shriveled arms of old Isaac with an abnormal strength. Fear, no longer for himself, had inspired him to tremendous effort when wrath and self-contempt had been forgotten. For suddenly Isaac had realized that his master was no longer of this world.

Life still animated faintly the limbs of Bland Hendricks. His heart beat, his feet moved staggeringly, and

from his lips came incoherencies. But these twain had been gentle master and adoring servant for more than six decades. During their companionship infants had grown to manhood, borne sons and daughters, and dandled grandchildren upon their knees. They knew each other, their strength and their weakness. And even as Jane Maynard had known when life left her father, so did old Isaac know that life was about to leave his master. Indeed, the old Negro knew that what life remained in Hendricks now was like the smoke that lingers after the flames have been extinguished.

And grief tore at the heart of Isaac. He would have died himself to save his master — now. But a few hours ago, almost simultaneously with his boast that he would die before he would desert his master, panic had overwhelmed him, and he had fled; fled shamefully, to let his master meet the mob, be slain by them.

He had returned, but — he had gone! In the midst of a grove not far from the Hendricks home, Isaac had wrestled with his fear and he had conquered. Fear was still in him, but he disobeyed its dictates. He had come, braving the white man's mob, to the rescue of his master. He had redeemed himself in the eyes of all those who tonight knew of the rescue, or to-morrow would hear of it. In the eyes of God, one feels safe in asserting, he had redeemed himself. But in his own eyes he was recreant.

And now, his false strength dissipated, knowing that the man whom he adored was on the verge of death, Isaac staggered and fell. Together, the weary black man and the grotesque victim of the mob, they pitched through the gap in the hedge upon the grass of the Maynard lawn.

And to them Jane came. She bent, conquering repugnance at the dreadful sight, over the body of Hendricks. From her window he had looked grotesque, but here, close at hand, he looked more than that. Like some-

thing obscene, unclean, he looked, as he lay upon the grass.

Her handiwork!

Her cry for help made Isaac, who had not heard her grass-silenced footsteps, lift his head. He recognized her, and into his eyes, dulled by emotion, by exhaustion, crept the glare of the savage. But cunning kept him silent, stopped the hand that slipped stealthily toward his jacket pocket. For while he *knew* that death was just around the corner from Hendricks, he might be wrong. There might be hope ——

But he knew that he had hoped vainly by the time that they were in the house. For, somewhere on the way across the lawn, whither he was borne by the Maynard butler and chauffeur, Bland Hendricks died.

Hours later, when the bruised, maltreated form had been laid in the drawing room of the Hendricks home, where later on men would shamefacedly come to look with horror on the deed that had been theirs, to repent, as men always do, the frightful deeds that they have done, old Isaac tiptoed out of the house.

He was just an old Negro, stupid by nature and dulled of intellect by many years. But he knew enough of humankind to know that those who had been of the mob, and those who by their tacit consent had been spiritually of it, though physically far away, would mourn, in sanity, what had been done in insanity.

But mourning would not bring back the master whom he had loved. Nothing could do that. Therefore, mourning was a waste of time. But vengeance—that was something else! And that he would exact. And there was only one person from whom he would exact it—Jane Maynard.

He knew the causes that had led to the formation of the mob. That in itself would have been enough to de-

nominate her as the one responsible for what had happened to-night. But there was more than that. From the overheard words that fell from the lips of those who composed Hendricks for his last rest, he learned that Jane Maynard had been present at Hendricks' capture, that she had struck him.

He couldn't kill them all, unfortunately. But the Maynard girl! It didn't matter that at the last she had come to his aid, had called her servants to bear his master into her own home, that she had summoned a physician. His thick lips slid away from his gleaming teeth until the red gums showed as he thought of Jane Maynard.

For the jungle was in his soul now. A life for a life, and his only regret would be that he could not take a score of lives for that precious one that had gone.

No longer did he fear the white man. Why hadn't he known that life without his master was but a mockery? Then he would not have yielded to panic, would have stayed by Hendricks' side, and perhaps — But what might have been was now inconsequential. He'd kill her, then kill himself.

But he was just a shambling, weak, aged darky when he rang, early in the forenoon, the bell at the Maynard front door. He touched his cap ingratiatingly when a maid opened the door.

"Like tuh see Miss Maynard, please, ma'am," he said.

The maid was haggard, nervous. She didn't recognize old Isaac. She only knew that a shabby, furtive-seeming old Negro was asking to see her mistress, who was now upstairs, fighting against an hysteria that advanced like a wave, conquered her, receded, then almost mockingly advanced again to submerge her.

"Miss Maynard is ill," she said.

"Yes, I reckon so," said Isaac. "Please, ma'am, I'd like tuh see her."

"She's ill," said the maid. "Don't you understand?"

From Isaac's lips came a chuckle, — senile, quavering.

"Yas'm, I understands all right. But I'm goin' see her."

The maid stared, then started to close the door. And the bent old body suddenly straightened; seemed, to the maid's alarmed eyes, to grow taller, broader. For he stepped inside the door and with a sweep of a suddenly powerful hand hurled her against the wall. His lips parted in the sort of snarl that his cannibal ancestors wore.

"Wheah is she, white woman? Answeh me," he cried.

The maid cowered before him. All that she had ever heard of maddened Negroes came back to her mind; she lifted a shaking hand and pointed toward the stairs.

He waited for no more, but ran down the hall and took the stairs three at a time. All of his age, all of his decrepitudes, fell away from him. He was a savage, a stalker of the jungle, and his prey was almost in sight.

Three rooms he invaded, and in the third he found Jane Maynard. The nurse, seated by the bedside of her delirious patient, was holding the girl's hand, was stroking her forehead, was talking to her in a soothing undertone. This was all that she could do. The doctor summoned to attend Hendricks had turned his attention to Jane. But medicine could do little or nothing. Buoyed up by a fictitious strength — a strength that had been neither of the mind nor of the body, but of the emotions — the girl's nerve force had fed, for a week, upon itself, until now it was consumed. She had collapsed when Hendricks' body had been removed.

To her aunt the doctor had shrugged his shoulders. "I'd be lying if I said that I could tell," he had said to her. "It's been inevitable. She's been acting abnor-

mally and — she may be insane when it's all over; she may be sane. At present — rest."

The nurse turned at the sound of Isaac's entrance. Jane had fallen asleep at last, and from sleep only could health, restoration of sanity, come. So the nurse lifted a finger to her lips, while her other hand moved in a gesture of peremptory dismissal.

Isaac laughed. His mirth, staccato, harsh, awoke the sleeping girl. She saw him at once; she sat up in bed. And then, as Isaac drew a revolver from his pocket, it was she who placed a comforting hand upon the nurse's shoulder. Her eyes were sane, calm, and they met those of the crazed Negro squarely.

"Put it away, Isaac," she said gently.

Again the black man laughed. "Put it away, huh? You says tuh put it away, eh? Heh-heh! Makin' jokes wid old Isaac, eh? Put it away? Yas, I'll put it away, Miss Maynard, but not till I've used it, ma'am." His eyes rolled. He had, like all savages, be they black men descended from the jungle or white men who travel in mobs, to work himself up to an emotional pitch of high excitement before the deed that he intended could be done.

"Put it away, you says. Huh? I reckon you think I come up heah for nothin', Miss Maynard, huh? Reckon you think as how I ain't goin' get square for what they did to Mist' Hendricks, huh? *You* done it, Miss Maynard!"

"I know it," she replied.

Her answer amazed him. It seemed to make him uncertain. He avoided her eyes while he cocked the revolver.

"Then why shouldn't I use this heah gun?" he demanded.

"Why," she said, "use it if — if ——"

"If what?" he demanded. His finger was on the trigger.

From far away, as though it were another's voice, phrasing speech which was incomprehensible to her, Jane heard herself reply,

"If you can."

"Why can't I?" asked the Negro. His voice was, oddly, almost a whimper.

Once again it was as though another's voice issued from her throat, using speech at which she would have laughed a day ago.

"Because I see you, Isaac, as perfect ——"

She stopped short. She laughed, scornfully, contemptuously, self-angered. She threw her arms wide, exposing her throat, her rounded bosom to the bullet.

But the revolver clattered to the floor. And Isaac said:

"Yas'm, yas, Miss Maynard."

And he shuffled from the room.

CHAPTER VI

SINCE man's fancy first turned toward philosophical speculation he has found no puzzle greater than, "What is physical?" Or the correlated questions, "What is mental? What is spiritual?"

Man enters upon a physical debauch. Are his consequent sufferings of the body, or of the soul, or of the mind? He commits a crime. Is it his spirit that endures torment? Then why, so often, is his health wracked, does his mind fail? He overworks; his mind breaks down, but his body also suffers disease.

Are all three, then, one? Or — is one all three?

Leland, on the morning following the attack upon Bland Hendricks, consciously asked itself none of these questions. It attributed its reaction to no specific cause; it only knew that its collective body felt bruised; that its collective soul was horrified; that its collective mind was dazed.

For reaction follows surely upon every action. Only a comparatively small percentage of Leland's population had taken actual overt part in the outrage. But the rest, those of adult age, had known of it, had winked at it.

But that Bland Hendricks should have been *killed!* Kelly, his Irish eyes tear-sodden, over and over again assured himself that he had had no idea that his angry words outside the bank would lead to *that*.

Jackson, sworn upholder of the laws, again and again told his accusing soul that had he dreamed of the results of the mob's action, he would have done something.

Rosenberg, Capelli, and those scores of others who had been friends of the dead man — their hatred had turned to remorse. Over the town, by noon, had settled a fog, not discernible to the eye, but visible to the heart, to the mind.

Why? That was the question that the town asked itself. The answer had been easy yesterday. Hendricks had interfered with the course of justice. It had come trippingly from every tongue. But to-day men faltered over the sentence. It is easy to judge when passion sways, but when one is cool, calm, justice is no exact thing, easily pronounced, simply administered; it is complicated, vague. For one moment Leland knew a great truth: Justice is infinite and cannot be administered by mortals. Of course Leland forgot it; forgot that it had ever known it; but for the moment it knew, and, knowing, suffered the bitterest anguish of remorse.

But after that moment of blank horror, when their souls felt naked, custom reasserted itself; that thing called local pride demanded a hearing. Already the news had been telegraphed to the outer world. Leland, a staid and settled community that held its good name precious, would be to the world a place where the mob spirit ruled, where the laws were laughed at, where — and this became suddenly vital — capital was not safe.

For if mobs override the law, what assurance has the investor that his investment is safe? If a mob can assault and murder, why can it not pillage and burn? Passion had ruled last night; the spirit ruled briefly in the morning; but by afternoon the god of common sense was enthroned once more.

Of course Leland must be justified in the outside world. But the justification must be very careful not to involve in unpleasant court proceedings the notables of Leland. If it were not that State officials sometimes take cogniz-

ance of a municipality's failure to enforce the law, Leland might have let the matter drop. Common sense inclined to that view. So — a whitewashing! That was what Leland decided upon, although the word was used by none of the town officials, was not used in private conversation even.

So, quite solemnly, the town officials, on the afternoon following the killing of Hendricks, assembled together and denounced the action of the mob. The chief of police was summoned before the solemn conclave. He proved, to the expressed satisfaction of the officials, that he and his police force had tried to prevent the mob from forming, that he himself had been overpowered. Minor police officers upheld his testimony.

And among all those numerous persons who appeared before the investigating body there was not one who had recognized any of the members of the mob. In all Leland not one individual, apparently, knew the name of another individual who had been in the mob. And so, having played the solemn farce to its logical end, the town officials passed a resolution which scathingly condemned the mob and its action, and which lamented the loss to the community of one of its leading citizens.

Leland had justified itself to the outside world. Its conscience felt better; it thought that by turning out for Hendricks' funeral, by listening approvingly to a eulogistic sermon over the body of the dead man, it had more or less redeemed itself. Perhaps it had.

And the jury that a few days later found Montreal Sammy guilty of first degree burglary, and the judge who, under a provision of the criminal statutes, was empowered to deal severely with habitual criminals, felt quite righteous as he sentenced Montreal Sammy to spend the rest of his life in prison. Young Jackson rubbed his hands together as he heard the judge's words. All of

Leland felt that an affair of most unpleasant potentiality had been successfully glossed over. And when the town learned that Jane Maynard's home was being closed, and that Jane herself was bound for some sort of health resort, the town was pleased, although it didn't say so. On the contrary, it expressed the deepest regret for Jane.

Still, in its heart, Leland was glad that she was going away, if only temporarily. For the whole town knew what she had done on the night of the killing of Bland Hendricks; knew that she had struck the victim of the mob — Leland could not at once forget that it had loved Jane Maynard, but — she, really, had inflamed the townspeople by her action in the bank. It was as well that she should go.

Jane knew nothing of all this. For when old Isaac had feebly dragged himself from her room, all the false strength of insane anger gone from his limbs, he had left behind him an unconscious girl.

She had undergone too much. This last scene with Isaac had been the final, culminating stroke against her reason. It tottered, swung down into the memoryless abyss that separates life from death. And there it stayed.

The doctors, the specialists who were summoned by Miss Anderson, could only shake their heads. They didn't know, and some of them were frank enough to say so.

Rest, perfect quiet, — these might restore the light to the dull eye, coherent speech to the tongue that now faltered over puerilities. For when consciousness had come again to Jane it was not the consciousness of the adult; it was the consciousness of the — almost — imbecile.

She recognized no one; she knew nothing; as any babe must be taught, or must learn through constant failure the simplest acts of coördination of body and brain, so

Jane Maynard learned them all over again. And so she had been taken to Berkshire, that semi-hotel, semi-hospital, which stands upon a huge, rounded hill and overlooks the Hudson.

There, always attended by a nurse, she fought, not knowing that she did, for health and sanity. The first came back swiftly. Too sturdy, despite her slim roundness, for illness to claim her long, was Jane Maynard. Behind her was an ancestry that had lived simply. It had given her a sound physique. And her own life had been filled with exercise.

Swiftly her cheeks regained their color; into her gray eyes, gentler now than ever, came the light of a zestful appreciation of fresh air, of sleep, of good food. Her step was as light as that of any animal; her movements as sure, as purposeful, when she rode or played tennis or golf upon the private courts or links of Berkshire as they had been in the days when she and her father had chummed together.

But her mind, — that was a vacancy. To one who saw her guide her horse with sure and steady hand, or saw her essay, with delicate touch, the trickiest of putts, her mental incapacity was not credible. Only when she spoke was one aware that nothing of the spiritual or mental animated this beautiful body; that her mind was dead.

Yet to Miss Anderson, and to those other relatives from New York, her condition gave hope. As a healthy mind so often means a healthy body, so a healthy body, they reasoned, must mean a healthy mind. Therefore it was only a question of time and patience; soon Jane would be all right again.

As a matter of cold fact, it was just as well that her condition was as it was. For, necessarily, the newspapers of New York had contained accounts of the treatment of Bland Hendricks. Although Jane's presence in the

mob had not seeped beyond the precincts of Leland, still the great world knew that her resentment at Bland Hendricks had led, directly or indirectly, to the mob's action. Had she continued her normal way of living, the great world might have looked at her askance.

But by the time that Jane should be recovered the great world would have forgotten all about the incidents at Leland; it would only know that, owing to the shock of her father's death, Miss Maynard had been ill; she could take up that proper place in society to which she had been destined. Yes, all in all, it was as well that Jane was, for the present, where she was.

Only one error did they, the relatives and friends and doctors, make in their diagnosis. Jane's mind was not ill; it was asleep. A great shock, a cumulative series of shocks, had made her unconscious. Her body had awakened, but her mind still slumbered.

Amenable to the easy discipline of the institution, sweet-tempered, amiable, she won for herself an affection from the attachés of the hospital equal to that regard in which she had been held by Leland. And because her health justified it, it soon came to pass that an attendant was not always at her elbow. She could be trusted to play a round of golf with one of those patients whose physical afflictions had sent her to Berkshire, and whose mind was unruffled.

Thus, on a day some months after Montreal Sammy had taken up his permanent residence in Sing Sing, Jane was playing a round of golf with a woman patient. The patient, a Mrs. Blaisdell, became tired. At the fourteenth hole she decided to stop playing and take a short cut back to Berkshire.

Jane mildly protested. If she could continue her present pace, she might break ninety. And when her companion offered to wait for her at the last hole, Jane con-

tinued by herself. She kept up the pace for the next two holes, and on the seventeenth she laid her ball dead with her second shot. She lacked that opportunity for comparison which is the delight of the average golfer. For she could not remember her duffer days. Oddly, too, she lacked curiosity. Her mind was capable of no real processes. That she had played under a hundred on the first day that she had gone around those links gave her no wonderment. The past was not merely sealed to her; it had no existence.

Nevertheless she had not before played this hole in par. To-day it was a mere matter of a six-inch putt, and she was smiling as she bent over and gently brought the head of her putter toward the ball. And then startled, frightened by the sudden clamor of a brass-throated bell, she missed the putt, sent the little ball a good six feet beyond the cup.

She stood erect, her body shaking. The great bell sounded again. She wondered where it came from, what it meant, that brazen sound that seemed to hint of things incomprehensible to her. Then, dismissing the matter, she walked across the putting green. Despite the repeated clangor, she sank the six-foot putt, and strode away to the last tee.

Another person shook with alarm as the note of the bell sounded. For Montreal Sammy had hoped that his escape from Sing Sing would not become known until dark. In darkness there was hope for him. He had managed to elude the guards; had managed to secrete himself aboard a motor truck leaving the prison precincts; had, unobserved, dropped from the truck half a mile from the prison; had, by the greatest good luck in the world, found not merely an empty house, but clothing inside it which fitted him fairly well; and had further, by

straining every muscle in his body, put, in one hour, several miles between himself and the walls of Sing Sing.

There was no reason why his absence should have been discovered before half-past five. And then he had hoped for another hour while the guards made certain that he was not somewhere within the walls. Dusk would have come by then. Now it was, he supposed, hardly four o'clock. Probably his cell mate, who had not dared risk the effort of escape, who, indeed, having only a few months more to serve would have been foolish to attempt it, had "squealed" on him. Montreal Sammy cursed bitterly as this thought came upon him.

For that warning bell meant not merely that the prison authorities were searching for him; it also meant that every policeman, every rural constable, every motorcycle-equipped member of the State police who heard it would be on the lookout for him.

He had been walking along a road, secure in the disguise of his stolen clothes and the hat pulled well down over his shaven skull, when the bell had sounded. But now every pedestrian was subject to suspicion. He leaped a wall and found himself in a thicket of woods. Cautiously he pushed his way through it; it was only a few yards wide, and suddenly he found himself overlooking a golf course. Beyond a stretch of green he could see woods again.

His cell mate, in whom he had been compelled to confide his intention to attempt escape, knew the country whereabouts extremely well. Night after night, when the lights were out, he had drilled Montreal Sammy in the geography and topography of the neighborhood. And so the convict knew that he was looking across the private links of the Berkshire. He also knew that the woods beyond stretched a mile or more, and would afford a way

of escape. For in the middle of them was a railroad track; he might swing aboard a freight train.

Silently he cursed the woman who was playing. Until she passed he would not dare cross the open space of green. And she was so deliberate.

He ducked his head suddenly. For Jane hooked a mashie shot. Her chance to break ninety still existed when she had sunk the six-foot putt, but the missing of the six-inch shot had unsteadied her. So now her chance went glimmering.

Still, she would play it out. And so she approached the thicket of woods toward which she had sent the ball, and in which crouched Montreal Sammy.

He heard her laugh of pleased surprise as she found the ball lying in the grass, a good yard away from the nearest tree. For it had struck a branch, been deflected, and then rebounded on to the fairway. The chance to break ninety still existed!

And then, as she took her stance for the mashie shot that she hoped would land her ball upon the green, Montreal Sammy recognized her. And he could not forbear a start of surprise.

The girl, poised for the stroke, heard his slight movement. She thought it was a bird or some small animal of the underbrush. But as she straightened up and turned an idly inquiring glance toward the trees, her eyes lighted upon the hand of Montreal Sammy, clutching, in his effort for silence, at the trunk of a sapling.

She looked along that hand, the bony, hairy wrist, the sleeve, the shoulder. And she saw the face of the frightened convict. Her mind had not been ill; it had been asleep. And now, instantly, it awakened. She took a stride forward, toward the trees, and the convict leaped to his feet.

But somehow he did not dare to run. He knew that

the game was up. He knew of other men who had tried to escape from Sing Sing. Unless they reached a city without recognition, they were always captured. The countryside is the most difficult place in the world in which to hide. For men must eat, and food cannot be procured in the country without arousing curiosity. In the city no one notices; but in the country each stranger is an object of acutest interest.

The game was up. Vaguely Sammy wondered that Jane Maynard should be the one to end it for him. But it was just his luck.

Her recognition was as quick as his. And not only did she know him, but all those memories that his face would have evoked had she been normal, his face evoked now. In one kaleidoscopic second she reviewed everything from the moment of the burglar's entrance into her father's sick room to the departure of old Isaac from her own bedroom.

Instinctively she had lifted the mashie above her head in a motion of menace. As swiftly as it had gone up, so swiftly did it come down. But it did not strike the cowering convict. It descended to the ground; its grip fell away from her hand.

"Well, holler your head off," whined Montreal Sammy.

She stared at him. Her mind functioned as easily, as swiftly, as though there had never been any break in that functioning. Shock had made that mind go to sleep; shock awakened it. If anything, it was perhaps refreshed by its long rest. Her processes were instant. She saw the cowering man and knew, though all was blank that intervened between old Isaac's meek departure and this moment, what must have happened. His cowering, his fear. . . .

.
"You've escaped?" she said.

Montreal Sammy could not marvel at her acuteness. He did not know of her condition. He nodded.

"Wait," she said. She looked behind her. Not a person was in view.

She turned back to him. "Run — across the fairway. You can hide — among those trees ——"

The convict stared at her. Though freedom suddenly stretched out her welcoming hands when a moment ago she had seemed to turn her back on him, he waited while he asked a question.

"Why? Why you helpin' me?" he demanded.

She stared at him. She shook her head. Why try to explain to him that, of all the events that had been set into motion by Montreal Sammy, the greatest of them, amazingly, was the speech, the creed, of Bland Hendricks? She had gone into mental slumber with those words of Hendricks upon her lips; she awakened from mental slumber with those words graven upon her heart:

". . . to see my neighbor as perfect . . ."

She seemed to hear the words; she seemed to see them; she seemed to feel them written upon her very being. And so she turned her back upon Montreal Sammy. She forgot her clubs, her golf bag; she strode toward the hospital. Her eyes were alight.

A doctor stopped her, amazed at the expression of her face. She smiled at him.

"Doctor," she said, "I want to leave here. I'm all well."

Next morning, while all Berkshire marveled at the suddenness of a cure for which Jane gave no reason, she went, with the hastily summoned Miss Anderson, to New York.

CHAPTER VII

LET the elder generation lament! It always has lamented and it always will lament. For the radical of yesterday is the reactionary of to-day. There are no artists to-day; there are no writers; there are no actors; there are no statesmen. But there never are, — to-day. Only in yesterday and to-morrow may we find genius, may we find that delectable land named "Things-as-they-ought-to-be."

So New York has changed; it is vulgar, crude, commercial, beautyless, harsh, strident, clanging, dirty, corrupt, vile. Those who have yesterday's standard with which to compare to-day's can prove it, over and over again.

Yet to one who sees the magic city for the first time, who emerges from the earth's bowels to gaze in appalled wonderment at the monster who crouches upon the island and reaches across the river and the bay, the lament of the elders is as one faint discord in a perfectly rendered opera. One forgets the discord.

To Jane, fresh from a long sleep, the great monster was a kindly thing, tamed, tractable. For her the monster smiled, gave of her best.

Miss Anderson went, immediately upon their arrival in New York, into council with the elders of the Anderson-Maynard family. She had had a long talk with the physicians in charge at Berkshire, and they had told her that Jane was undoubtedly cured forever. Her conversation on the train with Jane had strengthened her willingness to believe the doctors. Jane was well.

"It isn't," said Miss Anderson to the grave men and women who listened to her, "as though Berkshire were an *asylum*. Every one knows that it's a rest cure, that scores of people go there to recuperate from illness."

Her brother, Morton Anderson, eminent in the law, smiled gravely. "Jane hasn't disgraced us," he stated. "Even if Berkshire were an asylum, I'd still feel that Jane had not shamed us irreparably. Jane looks O. K. to me."

The others nodded assent.

"So," went on the lawyer, "I don't know why we should all assemble, like a group of conspirators ——"

"Jane told me, on the way here, that she didn't intend to live with any of her relations," said Miss Anderson.

Her brother laughed. He was a solemn-looking person, but he had a heavy sense of humor. "I'd say," he said, "that that shows her good sense."

His sister sniffed. "She is a young, unmarried girl ——"

"Rot," said her brother with that freedom of opinion and expression so well known to sisters. "She can take care of herself anywhere. She's had a darned hard time of it. A rotten time. And if we pick on her, make her think that we're watching her —— She *is* all right, isn't she?"

"She is," assented Miss Anderson.

"Well, then, because she's had a tough time, why remind her of it? Let her live where she wants."

His sister's nose tilted slightly. "Even on the East Side?"

"*We* live on the East Side," retorted Mortimer.

"Upper," corrected Miss Anderson. "But not down in the slums."

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"I mean that Jane is going to start some sort of set-

tlement work — she's vague about it — she doesn't exactly know what — or won't tell me, anyway. And I don't think that a girl of her position, considering everything, should make herself conspicuous —— ”

“ My dear Pauline,” said her brother, “ she can't, considering that Marley has been dead only a few months, lead a very active social life. Leland, you tell me, is quite naturally distasteful to her at the present time. Otherwise she might keep herself busy there. But in New York, barred, for some time to come, from the obvious gayeties of her age and sex — I think that she ought to be permitted to do what she likes. Charity work is a good thing. I approve it.”

Morton Anderson, by reason of his years, his money, and his position at the bar, was the acknowledged head of the family. His word was law. So nothing of the others' objections were told to Jane.

As for Jane, repossession of her faculties did not mean that she was the same Jane Maynard of old. She recognized this sooner than any one else, and marveled more. For she was honest with herself; it was not depression over the loss of her father — though she missed him sorely — that made her feverishly fretful to occupy her mind and hands. It was something else, something which she hated to admit to herself.

She sneered at herself; she argued and fought with herself; but to no purpose. Hadn't old Isaac come to her bedside with every intention of killing her? Hadn't a phrase sent him away?

She appealed to her common sense. Old Isaac was a crazy old Negro, and she had mastered him by her own courage. That was the explanation of common sense. But — was the explanation a true one?

Montreal Sammy had caused her father's death. A few months ago she had craved for his life. Now — only

the other day — she had let him escape. A word from her and he would have tamely marched back to Sing Sing. Yet she had not uttered the word; she had let him go.

Why? Because she no longer hated the man!

Was it disloyalty to her father? No, it couldn't be that. Nor could it be a suddenly acquired callousness of spirit. For the tears welled in her eyes, her throat contracted, her heart ached at every thought of Marley Maynard.

She had failed in no loyalty to his memory, then. Nor was it due, this strange feeling of hers, to a regret for what had happened to Bland Hendricks. Not that she was not remorseful. She was, at times, overwhelmed. But, so nearly as she could analyze her thoughts, her emotions, Bland Hendricks himself had nothing to do with her present intention. It was what he had said, what he represented, not the man.

And what had he said? He had said that he saw his neighbor as perfect.

It was an absurd statement; Jane recognized its absurdity. Yet, in defense of that belief, that man had surrendered his life. He had believed in its verity. Yet why should Hendricks' faith in his own fanaticism blind her to the dictates of common sense?

Were there two Jane Maynards? Would the common-sensible one suddenly awake and put the other one to sleep? For she studied herself with a queer detachment, as though she, herself, were another person.

She shook her head. The common-sensible Jane Maynard would never exist until fair play had been done.

Fair play! She had directly — it was useless to attempt to console her conscience with quibbles — been responsible for Hendricks' death. Her action, as she leaned from her motor, had inflamed an already maddened

mob. Because of her, Bland Hendricks had never had opportunity to preach and practice, as doubtless he had intended, his queer, madman's creed.

Was it not, then, common justice to carry on Bland Hendricks' work, to give it a trial?

She laughed at this reasoning; she sneered at it; she berated herself. But it made no difference; she seemed, somehow, in the grip of something stronger than herself, a helpless victim of its whims. And she was; for she was gripped in the clutch of an Idea, and an idea is stronger than armies, greater than the elements, more powerful than man himself. For man is himself but an idea; what he holds within himself differentiates him from the animals, and what can he hold but an idea?

And so she made her plans. They were vague, indefinite plans at first. Not until some weeks had passed, and she had drunk New York to the full, did she enter on anything definite.

For, after her period of mental slumber, New York, despite her grief at loss of her father, was a place of joy. To walk its streets, to breathe its electric atmosphere, to see the myriad faces of its hurrying throngs, to feel, as one must feel, the eternal restlessness of the city, its struggle for achievement, its never-aging youth. New York cannot know defeat.

Had she returned to Leland, the preposterousness of her vague intentions would have been shown to her at once. Leland was settled, staid, averse to change. But New York welcomed change; New York was ever changing itself; New York was the spirit of hope, of ambition; New York encouraged her. What if she were later mastered by common sense? New York would laugh with her, not at her, for her failure

On an East Side street, where the tall tenements, dingy, battered, cast their shadow of poverty upon the

littered pavement, she rented a house. It had been an old stable. Because of some defect in the title, investors had not built upon it one of those human hives wherein dwell the ineffectuals, the hopeless, of the great city.

But progressive tenants had made small improvements here and there. People had lived in it; rather, they had existed. A sickening stench arose from it, an odor compounded of musty disuse and improper drainage.

But she remodeled it. On the ground floor there came into being a good-sized hall, well equipped with tables and chairs. Along the walls were shelves of books and magazines; at one end was a piano, and at the other a great open fireplace. Beyond was a kitchen, well furnished with the implements of cooking.

Upstairs were bedrooms, half a dozen of them. One was Jane's. There were bathrooms, and each room was fitted with such toilet accessories as none of the women — or men, for that matter — of this lowly neighborhood had ever seen.

For the whole neighborhood saw the house. A very natural curiosity evinced itself during the alteration work. Women peered into the building. And Jane talked to them. Their husbands, sons, brothers, were told the queer tale.

No one exactly understood, except that the strange lady was a "nut." She was fixing up the house for *every one*. Well, that was what she *said*. Anybody that wanted a meal, or a place to sleep, or to play the piano, or cards, or read.

"That's where you are way off," said the tolerant Morton Anderson. "You have about six rooms. How on earth are you going to accommodate all the poor people who need shelter?"

"There'll be room enough," said Jane.

He stared at her. Her eyes were clear; they were

almost roguish in their expression. And her lips were curved in her old-time, lovely smile. He was a shrewd man; he knew an insane person when he saw one. And Jane was master of her mind.

Still — He attended the formal opening of the place. He came shortly after eight o'clock. One bright electric light shone above the door, illuminating a sign that had been hung since his last visit. He stopped and read the words:

BLAND HENDRICKS FOUNDATION
My Neighbor Is Perfect

He entered, pushing himself through a crowd of meek souls, men and women, who gave way to this prosperous being. The main hall was filled with people. Some one was playing the piano, and half a dozen were trying to sing. Others were playing cards, or reading, despite the intolerable racket. Perhaps, though, it wasn't so intolerable. They seemed happy, contented.

He went into the kitchen. Almost twenty women, some of them fat and some of them thin, but even the fat ones seeming badly nourished, had crowded into the kitchen. They were talking at the top of their lungs, the while they mixed things in bowls, or took them to or from the stove.

Jane was there, her sleeves rolled up to her pretty elbows. She gave her uncle a nod and joined him.

"This," he said, "is going to cost money."

"The rent is only a hundred dollars a month," she retorted.

"But — this food," he said.

"They brought it themselves," she told him.

He pursed his lips. "How'd you do that?"

She shrugged. "I told them that we'd have an opening party. I told every one to bring what he could —"

He changed the subject abruptly. "Do they get that — that sign outside?"

She shrugged again. "I don't know. They will. I make them say it when they come in."

"Say what?"

"My neighbor is perfect."

He stared at her. "And do they say it?"

"Of course; it's the only rule. It's easy to say it. You say it, Uncle Mort."

He looked at her. Slowly he said: "My neighbor is perfect."

She laughed. "Feel better?"

"My God, Jane," he exploded, "you — you don't think — that's the wheeze that Hendricks pulled, isn't it?"

She took no offense at his word "wheeze."

"That was it."

"And you're taking it seriously? You've named this building after him — Jane, I know you're not crazy. I *know* it. But ——"

"Say it again," she told him. "Say that your neighbor is perfect."

"Oh, my good grandmother!" he cried. "That sort of — of pap — may be all right to feed infants on — but, Jane — I — I didn't realize — I thought that settlement work was — well — giving them food or money — Jane, I came down to help you start the thing right. I brought a bunch of money — to hand around ——"

He took out his pocketbook; it bulged with bills; he withdrew them and handed them to Jane. He put the flattened wallet back in his pocket and eyed her. She nodded her thanks. She squeezed his hand.

"You're a good scout, Uncle Mort." She walked into the main hall and tossed the bundle of bills upon a table.

Mortimer Anderson, who respected money, shuddered involuntarily at her careless treatment of his gift. And then he gaped as she said, "If there's any one here who really needs some money, let him help himself."

She turned and went back into the kitchen. Anderson stayed in the hall. A dead silence reigned. Every eye was fastened upon the table, with its green burden. Then a man laughed nervously. "I gotta all da jack I need," he said.

The piano player hit the keys a resounding note. And when Anderson left the house, the money remained intact upon the table.

Well, he handed it to Jane. She was a wonderful stage manager. "I don't know her little game," he told the rest of the family, awaiting his return from the opening which they refused to sanction with their presence, "but it's deep. She's got a bunch of money — Marley must have left her half a million — but I never knew a charity worker that couldn't use more. Well, I gave her five hundred dollars, and, as I've told you, she just tossed it on a table and invited the gang to help themselves. Give you my word — just like that!"

"And you sent in a riot call for the police reserves?" asked his son, a youth about Jane's age.

"That's where you're fooled, son; in the same place that I was. I tell you, I stayed there two hours, and not a person had touched a single dollar!"

"Why?" demanded Miss Pauline.

"Oh, my sweet grandmother, ask me something easy! I don't know — unless she had them stage managed ——"

"Why would she do that?" demanded Miss Pauline.

Her brother was quite openly exasperated. "How do I know? She's as deep as ——"

"Some sort of a trick," said his son.

Which was exactly what Yegg Darby was saying, at that exact moment, to Montreal Sammy.

Sammy had reached New York in safety. There an old pal had given him a hiding place. But Yegg Darby was as penniless as Sammy. And so they had set out to rob a store whereof Darby knew. They had passed through Carey Street and seen the brilliantly lighted Hendricks Foundation. Both apprehensive of the light, they had shuffled speedily by, neither looking up at the sign.

An hour later, having opened the back door of the store, and having found that the owner was cautious enough to leave no money overnight in his place of business, they had wandered, disgruntled, back through Carey Street.

There Darby encountered a gentleman of his acquaintance, a humbler toiler in the same vineyard of crookedness in which Darby labored. He had told a marvelous tale.

A crazy skirt had opened some sort of a religious dump and offered everybody a bunch of kale; said to help themselves. The money, he guessed, was still on the table in the main hall.

"Was you there?" demanded Darby.

The acquaintance shook his head. "I'm leery of these dumps; there's somepin phony about them. But it's on the level."

"Whyn't some one grab the jack and blow?" demanded the indignantly incredulous Darby.

"I dunno. I guess they figgered they was a trick in it, somehow."

The acquaintance sauntered away. Montreal Sammy stared at the house across the street. The electric light over the sign was not burning. It was not Jane's fault; she had intended it to burn all night. But a defective wiring had caused it to burn itself out. There was noth-

ing to illuminate that sign which would have evoked memories to Montreal Sammy.

"Well, let's crash in and see what's what," said Sammy.

Darby hesitated. "It's some sort of a trick," he replied.

CHAPTER VIII

MONTREAL SAMMY sneered. He eyed his reluctant companion contemptuously. "Sure it's a trick," he agreed. "The easiest trick I ever heard of. No one in the house except a lady with a cracked dome and a bunch of jack waitin' for a coupla handsome young fellows to come in and get it."

Yegg Darby hesitated. "It ain't reasonable, Montreal. I'm sort of off churches, if it comes to that."

"It ain't a church," exclaimed Sammy. He turned and stared again at the house across the street. There were lights burning there, both upstairs and down. But their informant had assured them that, so far as he knew, every one except the mistress of the place had left.

"And, anyway," he persisted, "if there's any ruckus, can't we say we just blew in to get a dime's worth of religion?"

Yegg Darby grinned. "A dime's worth of religion wouldn't do you no good, Sammy."

"No; nor a million dollars' worth of it wouldn't help you," retorted Sammy. "Why, a whole churchful of it wouldn't put a new pair of shoes on your big feet. Do I crack it alone? If I do, I spend it alone."

He looked up and down the street. Carey Street had gone to bed. And the occasional late wanderer didn't disturb them. Was this not a "religious dump"? Were they not two honest men in need of spiritual consolation? It was with such specious argument that Montreal Sammy bolstered up the waning courage of Yegg Darby. If any one saw them enter, they had their answer ready for any

impertinent question. And so they crossed the street and mounted the few steps.

The practiced fingers of Montreal Sammy rested lightly on the door knob. The oldest, most squeaky latch, the most noisy hinges, held no fear for Sammy. And this door had been newly hung. They stepped swiftly across the threshold. A light burned in the hallway. An opened door at the left revealed the large hall, with its piano, its open fireplace, its many chairs, and its table, upon which, visible from where they stood, was a bunch of paper money, weighted down by a carelessly placed book.

Ahead of them was a narrow flight of stairs, illuminated by an electric light at the top. But there was no one on those stairs; apparently, so nearly as their practiced ears could detect, there was no one downstairs. Animated by one impulse, they stepped through the open door into the large hall.

Together they reached the table and stared down at it.

"Phony?" whispered Darby.

Montreal Sammy shook his head. He could tell counterfeit money, he believed. This explanation of the money's presence was false. For it was well-worn, much-used money. A sudden indignation, similar to that which had reigned in Darby's breast a few minutes ago, possessed Montreal Sammy.

What was the world coming to? The people who had been present at the opening of this religious house had been *offered* the money. He'd sneered when the word "trick" had been used, but still —

Amazed by the incredibility of the whole business, the two men lifted their eyes from the table and gazed at each other. And then their meeting glances shifted to the doorway. They stared at the woman who suddenly stood there.

Jane had not heard their entrance, did not know that they were present. She had retired to her room upstairs, as bewildered, as dazed, as any one of the most sophisticated of the evening's guests.

She had had no definite plan. Beyond the fact that she was opening a place of rest and entertainment and possible helpfulness, she had not known exactly what she was doing. Somewhat similar might have been Joan of Arc's feelings. The Maid had a definite plan — to free France — but did she know how?

She had insisted on the utterance of one phrase by those who entered the Hendricks Foundation. But that was all. She had told her uncle that the six bedrooms would be sufficient accommodation for all who needed shelter. What, exactly, had she meant by that? She could hardly have told in coherent speech.

She had offered her uncle's five hundred dollars to whosoever wished it. And it had remained on the table all evening. Now, in her room, a dressing gown around her, her feet in slippers, a great peace mingled with a great bewilderment.

The poor — these were the very poor down here on Carey Street — had asked nothing of her, had taken nothing. But she was an extremely practical young woman. Until now! What had obsessed her? In the reaction from the excitement of recent days, culminating in the entertainment of to-night, she asked herself that question.

And suddenly, out of her bewilderment, out of her peace, came the answer. She knew, at last, that she had been animated by no injunction laid upon her mind by the mind of another. She was her own free self, but — she had realized a truth.

Now, in her room, she analyzed, what the simple creed of Bland Hendricks meant, in a practical way. "My neighbor is perfect." If she believed that, it must be

true. For her neighbor's only existence, in so far as she was concerned, was in her mind. It was as she saw him that he was.

If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

The line from the old poem sprang inconsequentially into her head. But — was it inconsequential? Wasn't there truth in it? If one saw another person as beautiful — She'd heard cousins rave about the girls with whom they were in love. They'd been rather ordinary young women, she'd usually thought. And the adored young women had spoken dreamily about these selfsame commonplace cousins. To each other, then, these couples were no less than perfect. But outside couples, — were they "fair" to the onlookers? She smiled. They hadn't been particularly so to her. Nice, ordinary, healthy girls and boys.

But that had been in one of the yesterdays. To-day, to-night, it was all different. Her neighbor *was* perfect. Every one who had been present to-night — kindly, generous, friendly, amiable. Hadn't they been? Of course they had been. Without greed. She suddenly wondered, ashamed of herself for wondering, fighting against the feeling, but unable to conquer it, if that money downstairs still remained there. Somehow it had become symbolical of something, that something which was still inchoate in her mind, but that she was beginning to define.

She would look; would reassure herself. Of course, it had been offered to all those present. Any one of them had a right to any or all of it. There had been no strings tied to her gift. But it had been intact when she had said good-by to the last of her guests. If any one should have returned, taken it —

So, noiseless in her soft mules, she reached the door of the general hall and saw there, standing by the table, the two visitors.

Montreal Sammy recognized her at once. For one brief second he was panicky. She'd let him escape that day on the golf course, but there was such a thing — though Sammy didn't phrase it that way — as tempting Fate too far. He called it, to himself, "pressing his luck."

But panic left him, and also the heart of Yegg Darby, at her first words. For, though their stealthiness, their alarmed attitudes proclaimed the reason for their entrance, they had not been of those who had entered, more formally, earlier in the night. None of those who had been her guests, who had recited the brief four-word phrase, had returned, had abused that faith, that creed, which willingly enough they had proclaimed. Horror, a queer fear, that had possessed her as she tiptoed downstairs, left her.

"Help yourselves," she said genially.

It was a queer remark, and the tone in which it was uttered was queer. At least, so Yegg Darby thought. Indignation, or, if the place were really run by a religious "nut," a few prayers would have been more in order. But, instead, came a friendly invitation. Yegg Darby, eyeing her closely — he'd seen women before who pretended courage, self-control, while they were gathering themselves for a scream — replied, "That's what we came for. Glad you take it so nice and easy. Keep on that way. If you let a yip outa your system —"

"Chop it," interrupted Montreal Sammy. Yegg Darby turned on him, aggrieved.

"I'm just tellin' her," he said.

"Lay off," ordered Sammy. He looked at the girl. And now she recognized him. He saw the recognition in

her eyes. Would she, this time, scream? But he was not panic-stricken, although wary. He slipped around the table as she entered the room. Darby moved slightly to one side, also, casting a glance that requested instruction from Sammy. But the latter gave none. And so Darby, a simple child of the underworld, acted in a fashion that should have won the commendation of his companion.

Jane was looking at Montreal Sammy. And so, as he slipped to one side, Darby also slipped forward. His forearm was pressing against the girl's throat, stifling any possible cry, before she had taken two strides into the room. He had no more real courage than Montreal Sammy, but he was quick as any cat.

"Bring a towel — anything," he demanded. "We'll gag her ——"

But Montreal Sammy brought something else. He brought a gnarled and knuckled fist and placed it against the ear of his companion. Dazed, almost knocked out, Darby staggered away. He fell to one knee, half rose, his hand at the side of his face, then dropped back into a kneeling position as Montreal Sammy advanced toward him.

Jane held out her hand, and Sammy fell back.

"If he hadn't been in such a hurry," said Montreal Sammy, "I coulda told him that you and me — why, that you and me ——"

"Are old acquaintances," prompted Jane.

Montreal Sammy nodded. "Sure," he said.

He was animated by no gratitude because Jane had not hindered his escape from prison. He was animated by cunning. This woman knew him; if she chose, she could inform the police that she had seen him; short of murder — and he shrank from anything like that — there was nothing to prevent her from setting the police, who,

he had reason to believe, thought him on a schooner bound for South America, on his trail. But she had let him go once — she might be persuaded to let him go again. It was pressing his luck, but — there wasn't anything else to do.

Jane put her hand to her throat. It throbbed painfully. There would be a red bruise there shortly. She looked at Darby, crouched, watching this amazing scene. Montreal Sammy misunderstood her glance.

"I'll bust him again if you want," he volunteered. He took a stride toward Darby, and that gentleman gained his feet. He raced into the hall, and they heard the door crash behind him. Montreal Sammy grinned. There were few people of his acquaintance who feared him; Yegg Darby had endeared himself to Montreal Sammy because he was afraid of him. It was gratifying to Sammy's vanity that his fellow fled.

"Why, if we'd known it was you here ——"

Jane sat down. She was faint, slightly dizzy. Yegg Darby's bony forearm had crushed the air from her lungs.

"You came for the money, of course," she said.

Montreal Sammy shrugged. "Well, what else?"

"I thought — I hoped — you might have known — did you see the sign outside?"

He shook his head.

"Every one who comes," said Jane, "must say: 'My neighbor is perfect.'"

Sammy stared at her. That was what the queer old guy, Hendricks, had said. That's what they'd killed him for saying. And now this daughter of the man who had died upon Sammy's entrance into his room was running a place, admission to which was gained only by saying the same crazy rigmarole.

"I didn't know that," he stammered.

She smiled. "Obviously you didn't. Say it now," she ordered.

Sammy shrugged. Nut stuff, but — what matter? He said it. Jane eyed him. Did she expect some physical sign of an inward regeneration? If so, she didn't see it. For Sammy was still watchful, still cunning.

"Now — what do you want?" she demanded.

He grinned. "You know what I came for." He shot a glance at the money on the table.

"It's yours," she said.

"On the level?" he asked.

"Take it," she said.

He eyed her. Then, slowly, he reached for the money. Midway to it his hand stopped. She couldn't fool him. There was some trick. He couldn't figure it, but — he was no sucker. No crazy Moll could put anything over on him. And then, suddenly, something else animated him. Another idea possessed him.

This girl had let him go once; she was offering him money now. Suppose that she was in earnest, on the level? In that case, there was a whole lot more than five hundred to be made out of her? He'd read and heard of broads that took a fancy to a crook, tried to reform him, slipped him all the jack in the world.

"Aw, I don't want it," he said sullenly.

It was incredible, but — she must believe it. Strangely, she did believe it. Into his surly voice she put embarrassment; into his restless eyes she put remorsefulness.

She held out her hand again; this time Montreal Sammy gingerly accepted it. No decent woman had touched his hand in a score of years. He relinquished it suddenly, red with embarrassment, and with hot self-hatred. Somehow he wished to God he could knock her down, grab her money, beat it. He couldn't.

"It's yours, you know. Part or all of it," she said.

"Ain't I tellin' you I don't want it?" he retorted angrily.

She sank back into her chair. This was the man whom she had hoped to have executed by the State, for whose death, so recently, she would have given thanks to God. Subconsciously, while she tried to keep the Bland Hendricks idea in the forefront of her mind, she realized all this.

Was it true, this Bland Hendricks idea? And she knew that it was! This man could not hurt her, would not steal.

"I gotta be goin'," said Montreal Sammy.

"Where?" she demanded.

Sammy didn't answer. Yegg Darby had taken him in, given him a hiding place. But to-night he had knocked Yegg Darby down. More unforgivable than that, Yegg Darby would know that Sammy could have had this money, Darby would not believe that the possible "trick" had deterred Montreal Sammy from seizing the money. To join the beaten Darby without money. And he wouldn't take any part of this money. Somehow, cunning had nothing to do with this decision. There wasn't any trick to it; but the girl was crazy, and ——

"I dunno," said Sammy.

"Stay here," invited Jane.

"Huh?" He didn't understand.

"This is a home for those who wish it," she explained. "There are rooms upstairs. You may have one for as long as you want."

He heard her; he understood. Not only was she crazy, but — he, Montreal Sammy, was crazy, too. What was that rigmarole she'd made him recite? "My neighbor is perfect." What did it mean? What was it all about?

As she turned toward the door, he stared at the money. One movement of his agile fingers and it would be in his

pocket. But what good, he suddenly asked himself, was five hundred dollars? For that matter, what good was five million, when the police wanted you?

Suddenly Montreal Sammy felt bewildered, helpless. Life had offered no complexity to him thus far. One stole and escaped; one stole and was caught. That was all there was to it. But now it suddenly became involved. A simple sentence complicated it. This dame meant what she said. He could have the money, could have a room here to-night. Why? Because she believed this stuff that the man up in Leland had sprung on the young district attorney who'd wanted to ring for a police wagon to convey Montreal Sammy to the police station.

Now, she was a lady; a real swell, he'd learned, while he was incarcerated in the Leland jail. Brains, society — all that stuff. Yet here she was, down here in the slums, practicing, apparently, what Hendricks had preached. *Was there anything in it?*

A new creed almost invariably has its start among the very poor. Because they are simple of mind; and creeds, religions, depend upon faith, not upon intellect. Man has devised no creed as yet which cannot be ridiculed by the intellect. But the heart is something else.

The poor are simple-minded. So is the criminal.

Was there anything to it? Suddenly Montreal Sammy felt that Jane Maynard was not merely a "nut." She was an extraordinarily kind person who had forgiven him something that he'd never have forgiven his — his — why, he wouldn't have forgiven anyone!

"I'll take one of those rooms," he said slowly.

She smiled at him. He was warmed by it, thrilled, as he followed her upstairs. Between the clean sheets of the bed in which he was presently lying, he pondered the bizarre situation. What would Darby say? Well, if Darby laughed, he'd knock him for a goal. No, he

wouldn't. Darby was O. K. He was sorry that he'd hit him. But Darby was a swell pal; Darby wouldn't be sore; Darby was a regular feller.

He didn't know Yegg Darby as well as he thought.

CHAPTER IX

YEGG DARBY, in the course of time — a brief course — would have forgiven and perhaps forgotten the blow upon his ear. This is, had other untoward events not arisen. For Darby was not the revengeful sort. He'd seen too many promising young lads sent to jail because they entered into private feuds. With the police and all society against them, it is obvious that crooks who fall out are fools.

Not that Darby would kiss the hand that struck him. He did not *enjoy* being struck. But he was yellow to the very soul of him. Montreal Sammy could whip him; also, there was a profit in their partnership. Montreal Sammy was far more expert and versatile than Yegg Darby. When pride conflicted with profit, Darby knew which side to take.

So, beyond some mumbled threats as he slunk along home, threats that were as vague in his mind as they were on his tongue, Darby intended no harm to Montreal Sammy. And probably would have done him none had not a certain Allen entered the dingy tenement room of Darby early the following morning.

A square-toed man, heavy of body, and with hard eyes and gross nose and mouth and stubborn chin, the smile with which he looked down upon the sleeping Darby boded that criminal no good. He sat down suddenly and heavily upon the edge of Darby's bed. The sleeping man awoke.

He recognized his caller at once. More than once had the plain-clothes man placed a heavy hand upon his shoulder.

"Well, what *you* want?" he demanded. He tried to be gruff, to assume an anger that would hide his fear.

Allen grinned amiably. "Well, maybe I want you."

"Maybe?" Darby sat up in bed. "How'd you know where to find me?" he asked.

Allen's smile was still amiable, but underneath it, Darby knew, was a sneer. "Little boys shouldn't ask foolish questions," he replied. Then suddenly he leaned forward until his big gross face was hardly six inches from the face of Darby. All amiability vanished from his expression.

"Where's Montreal Sammy," he asked.

Darby understood the "maybe" that had been in Allen's speech a moment ago. He simulated a prideful indignation.

"Who you think you're talkin' to?" he demanded. "I ain't no stool."

"No?" Allen leaned back now and laughed. "Well, that's a good one. Not a stool." He ceased laughing, and his voice was heavy with threat. "Why, what else are you, you cheap yegg? As if any crook in the world wouldn't squeal on his own mother to save himself! Where's Montreal Sammy?"

"In Sing Sing, ain't he?" countered Darby.

Allen nodded heavily, after the fashion of one who accepts a situation, even though the situation be not entirely to his liking.

"All right, feller; have it your way. Get up and dress."

"Oh, I ain't finished my beauty sleep," said Darby.

"Now, ain't that too bad?" commiserated Allen. He stared at the crook. "Especially as you need about a million years of beauty sleep, and I ain't sure that even then ——" He broke off to laugh at his own not too nimble wit.

He gathered the folds of the bedclothes in one big hand;

the blankets swished through the air and fell upon the floor, exposing Darby almost completely dressed.

"Come along," ordered Allen.

"Now, looka here," protested Darby. "You ain't got a thing on me, and ——"

The grin of Allen was ferocious now. "Ain't I? Wait and see, sucker. Who was in Mendel's warehouse three months ago?"

"Three months ago!" Darby's jeering laugh was not quite convincing, however.

"Yup. Three months ago," repeated Allen imperturbably. "But maybe you got failin' memory, Darby. All right. Who was in Bernstein's store last night?"

"Last night?" Darby was dazed, whipped, beaten.

"I said last night," said Allen. "Why, you poor bimbo, Bernstein telephoned at seven this morning. I was there in ten minutes; by half-past seven I've rounded up a coupla people that seen you in the neighborhood last night — where's Montreal Sammy?"

"What's he got to do with Bernstein's store?"

"That ain't bothering me. Don't let it bother you. I don't care if he busted Bernstein's place or not. Bernstein didn't lose any dough, anyway. He'll forget all about it. And I'll forget all about you."

There was no loyalty, save that dictated by self-interest, in the soul of Yegg Darby. Of course he didn't believe that Allen could prove anything about last night's attempt at robbery, but that Mendel warehouse matter —— He didn't know that any one knew of his connection with that affair. Allen was shrewd, merciless. The plain-clothes man had waited until he wanted something.

"You see, Darby," went on the detective, "you're small fish. Out of luck, too. You didn't get anything at Mendel's; you got nothing last night. I've always had my eye on you."

"You can't prove a thing on me about last night. I don't even know what store you mean," declared Darby.

"Maybe so; maybe *not* so; I won't argue. But the Mendel matter—sucker, I can put you away for five years just as *easy*. Now, you be a good boy. I'd have been around before, knowing you and Montreal used to be pals, only we got a straight tip that Sammy was out of the country. We got that from another pal of his. That pal," he put in parenthetically, "will get his one of these bright days. Well, anyway—one of the people that mentioned seeing you near Bernstein's last night described your companion."

He lighted, with ostentatious carelessness, a black cigar.

"Well, what'll it be, Darby? *Come* through or *go* through?"

Now, Darby had never yet worn justly that odious appellation of "squealer." He didn't want to wear it now. And so he put his hand up to his bewildered forehead, to try, perhaps, to rub decision into his harried brain. His fingers touched his bruised ear.

Why, Montreal Sammy was no pal of his! Montreal Sammy had busted him one last night and had wanted to bust him another.

He "came through."

Allen rose heavily from the bed. "Much obliged, Darby. Well, I guess that'll be all. Watch your step, kid."

He sauntered out of the room, hiding his elation. For the capture of Montreal Sammy, an escaped Sing Sing "lifer," meant a great deal to Allen. It might mean a sergeantcy. What a wise one he'd been to withhold arrest of Yegg Darby; just as he'd always known, the crook had proved useful.

Half a block away from the Hendricks Foundation he

hesitated; but only momentarily. He did not lack courage; he had his pistol with him; he could handle a dozen Montreal Sammies. There was no sense in splitting the glory.

But he didn't need his weapon; the capture of Montreal Sammy was in no sense of the word dramatic, although it was strange.

For, as Allen opened the unlocked door of the Hendricks Foundation he came face to face with Sammy, who was just emerging from the main hall, by way of the kitchen, where he had breakfasted. And such a breakfast! It had been served to him by a colored cook, and her sniffs of disdain proved no interference with Sammy's appetite.

He had awakened rather late and at first had difficulty in placing his surroundings. And when he had placed them, when he had remembered and gone over all the incidents of the previous night, he still had difficulty in realizing that he, Montreal Sammy, had participated in those incidents.

Why hadn't he grabbed the money and fled? He didn't know. He only knew that if the money were still downstairs he would not take it now. Yet he hadn't reformed. As he dressed his mind was occupied with pleasant thoughts of a cheap jewelry store which did a thriving business. He knew the make of safe, too. He'd had no luck last night, but this night —— He'd dig up Darby, square it for the wallop on the ear —— Darby certainly had looked funny as he went down. Spraying water upon his face, Montreal Sammy noticed himself in a mirror in the bathroom so close to his room. Some chest; some arm! Why, if he put his weight behind a punch he would knock Darby so far that he couldn't telephone back.

The colored woman had detained him as he tiptoed downstairs. She disapproved of her job; disapproved of her mistress; she'd arrived this morning and she expected

to quit her job this afternoon. But meanwhile she'd do as she was told. And the mistress who had engaged her at an employment bureau yesterday had opened the door for her an hour or so ago, and had told her that a guest upstairs was probably still sleeping, and that he must be given breakfast before he left.

So grumblingly, disdainfully, the cook had served him, wondering if this was one of the persons whom she must think was perfect, and telling herself over and over again that as soon as her new mistress returned, she'd tell her to engage some one else. She herself didn't care about this place; sort of a crazy place it must be; a place where you had to say some foolish words before you came in. However, Sammy didn't know her feelings, nor would he have cared had he been aware of them.

He strolled from the kitchen, picking his teeth in a fashion that he conceived to be quite man-of-the-worldly; he glanced, as he passed through the main hall, at the pile of money still upon the table. He hesitated only a moment. He shrugged his shoulders in bravado. He wouldn't take it, just to spite — Spite whom? He didn't know. And it was while still in perplexity over the question that he stepped into the entrance hall and came face to face with Allen.

For the briefest fraction of a second fright held Montreal Sammy; it vanished; he never knew where it went to. He only knew that he grinned at the plain-clothes man and said: "Well, I suppose you're looking for me?" He had forgotten all about the jewelry store with its easy safe.

Allen eyed him; he withdrew his hand from his pocket, where it had clutched the butt of a gun. "Well, it's like old times, roundin' you up, Montreal."

Sammy nodded. "Uh-huh." He and Allen were old acquaintances. "Well, let's go," he said.

"In a hurry to get back to the old hoosegow, eh? Well, why rush? I'd like to look around a bit, Sammy." He stared at his captive. "Funny place to find you, Sammy. A religious dump, eh? Did they convert you, feller?"

Sammy grinned sheepishly. "Nothin' like that, Allen. Let's go," he insisted.

"I'd kind of like to talk with the woman that runs this place," said Allen.

"Aw, she's out somewhere. Why bother her?" said Sammy. He felt, oddly, a strange unwillingness to let Jane Maynard see him led away by an officer of the law. A queer pride; one that he did not comprehend.

Allen frowned in puzzlement. Of course Montreal Sammy was yellow; he should have known that he'd surrender without a protest. But still — he was too acquiescent. And, looking over Sammy's shoulder, toward the table in the main hall, Allen thought that he understood this amazing meekness. "Huh?" he chuckled. "Got a slant at me coming and dropped the kale, eh?"

"What kale?" demanded Sammy.

"Quit kiddin'. The money on the table — now we *will* wait for the lady. Get her to make the charge — not that there's any charges needed to put you back in your country place up the river, but just for luck."

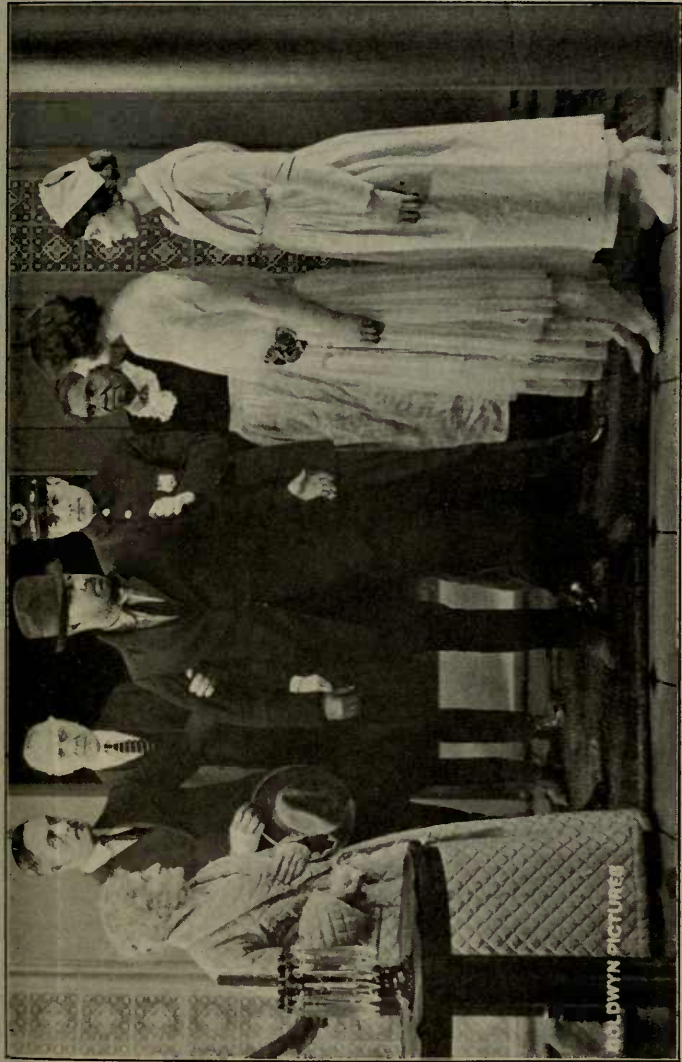
He heard steps outside and threw open the door to confront the woman who, he knew, was the sponsor for this new-fangled house of religion.

Jane entered with a welcoming smile. "A friend of yours?" she asked Sammy.

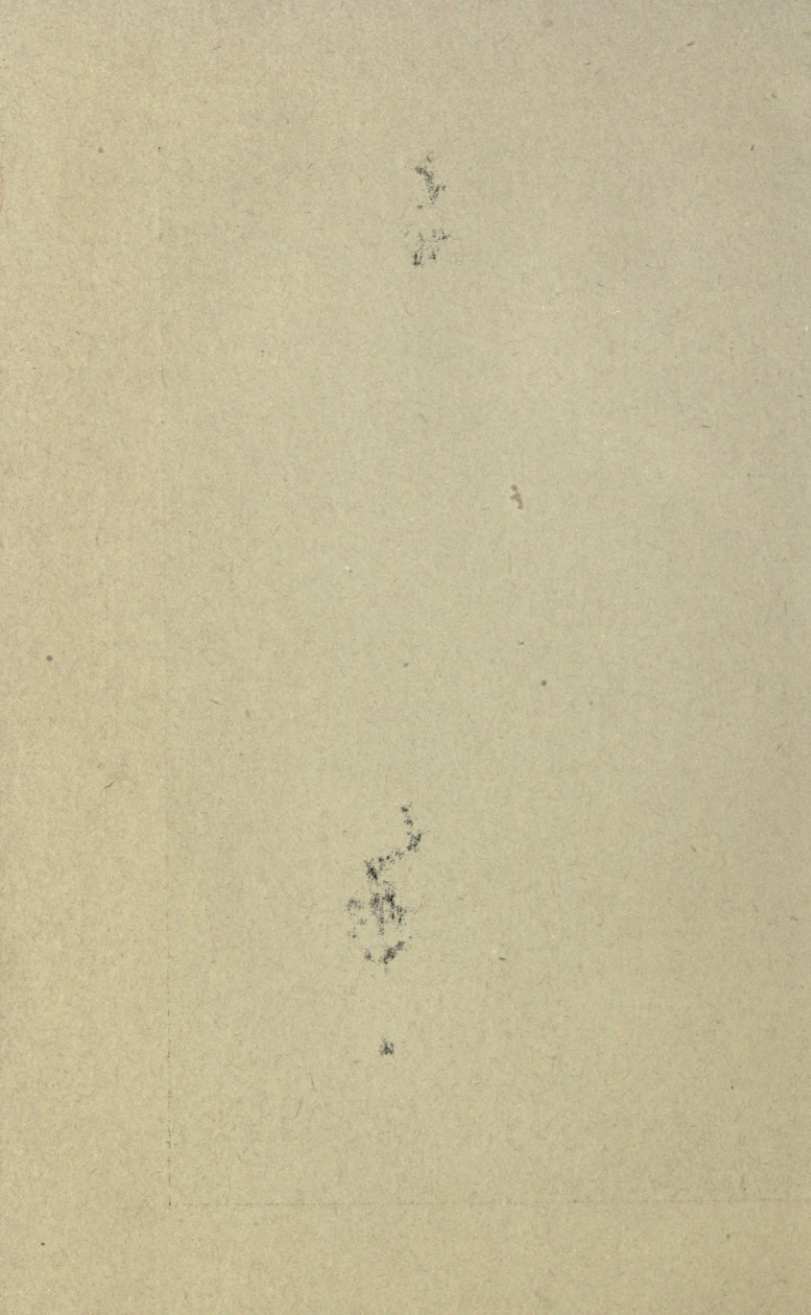
Sammy grinned sheepishly. "Yes'm. We're goin' for a little walk."

"A nice little walk, lady," said Allen. "To police headquarters."

Over the girl's face, flushed from her walk, came a look



Montreal Sammy swears revenge against Jane.
(*The Day of Faith*)
(A Goldwyn Picture)



of comprehension and commiseration. Impulsively she held out her hand to Sammy.

"Don't be afraid," she said. "Nothing can happen ——"

She paused, incapable of further speech. She had planned no future for Sammy; in the vastness of the idea that she felt she was beginning to grasp, such mundane, sordid things as policemen, jails, and the like held no place.

Allen grinned. "No, I guess nothing can happen to him. Not for the rest of his life. It's back to Sing Sing — I guess, lady, you ought to be more particular about the people you let in here. You didn't happen to know this gentleman's name, did you? Or his business?"

"Why certainly," she said.

Montreal Sammy made a sudden move toward her; his fingers went to his lips; his right eye closed in an elaborate, cautioning wink. She paid no attention to him.

"He is named Montreal Sammy, and he is a professional burglar, who recently escaped from Sing Sing. I saw him the day he escaped; I showed him where to hide."

Allen gasped. "You — what?"

"Showed him how to get away," she declared.

Sammy groaned. Allen stared at her, ugly lines showing about the corners of his mouth.

"An escaped convict," said Allen, "and you knew it, and yet helped him get away. Could I ask what you was plannin' to do with him here?"

"I hadn't planned anything at all," replied Jane.

"Well, it would have been wiser if you had," stated Allen. "You might have planned, for instance, to get him out of sight —— You come along too," he said harshly.

"With you?" Jane stared at him. "Why?"

"I'm thinkin' maybe headquarters will be interested to

know that there's a new underground railway for helping prisoners escape, started up in this town," said Allen grimly.

"Aw, hold your horses, Allen," said Sammy scornfully. "Can't you see she's kiddin' you?" Again he winked at Jane.

She understood now. Of course there was a law against aiding escaped criminals, but — there were other laws, laws that transcended the man-made kind. "I'll go with you — gladly," she said.

Two hours later Montreal Sammy was on a train, heavily ironed, on his way to Sing Sing. And Jane Maynard was facing a magistrate. She had given her name and pedigree as the clerk of the court asked for it. A dozen reporters, hastily summoned as the "tip" was given by a friendly officer, were in the court room.

An assistant district attorney, pluming himself because his name would be in to-morrow's headlines, had stated the charge against her, that of aiding and abetting in the escape of a convict. He asked that she be remanded for trial and freed only upon heavy bail.

"For, your honor," he said, "the facts that this woman is of unimpeachable social standing, that she has inherited great wealth, but aggravate her offense. No one has more respect for religion than I have, but my respect is confined to organized religion. If, under the guise, the mere name, the mere pretense of worthy motives, we can permit the establishment of new creeds that violate the law, where is our society, where is our government, where is our country?"

He was a young man given to impassioned oratory. The cynical reporters smiled, but it made good copy.

"I don't think," said the judge mildly, "that the situation is quite as black as you paint it. I am not inclined to believe that Miss Maynard plans a rendezvous for es-

caped criminals. I would like to hear Miss Maynard's story. Miss Maynard, you were not aware that this convict was an escaped criminal, were you?"

The lawyer hastily retained by Morton Anderson nodded meaningly at her. In the rear of the court room Morton Anderson himself leaned forward. All that Jane had to do was deny the testimony of Plain-clothesman Allen, and the judge would do the rest. The name of Maynard carried too much weight to be overbalanced by the testimony of any policeman. Besides, the judge was a warm friend of Morton Anderson.

But Jane replied, "I knew all that."

The judge frowned. "Yet you sheltered him? You admit that Officer Allen's testimony is true?"

"Absolutely true," said the girl.

The judge took off his glasses and wiped them. Why hadn't Mort Anderson and his attorney taken her in hand and ordered her what to say? They couldn't blame him.

"Miss Maynard, may I ask the creed of this — this settlement house of yours?"

"My neighbor is perfect," she answered.

The judge put on his glasses. "And in pursuance of that creed you helped this — this Montreal Sammy to escape, sheltered him last night?"

She nodded in assent. His frown became threatening. "Miss Maynard, do you realize, if every one acted upon your theory, what would happen to the world?"

"What do you think would happen?" she countered.

"It would become anarchistic, crazy, insane! Don't you think so?"

She looked at him; then she looked at the reporters, their pencils suspended, awaiting her reply.

"Why no," she answered. "I think it would become Christian."

CHAPTER X

It is a world which believes in advertising. Such a world is apt to be without that certain nice discrimination which commends itself to the meticulous mind. "I don't care what they print about me," said the wise politician, "so long as they print it."

The actress poses in corsets, and her photograph is spread broadcast in the public prints. It may be that she has never appeared — and never will — upon the stage divested of corset-covering gowns. It doesn't matter; her name and likeness have been given publicity.

She may lack all talent save the ancient one of interesting royalty. Yet, enlighten the world as to the details of the scandal, and her salary leaps to the fourth figure.

Because it believes in advertising, the world believes in personality. Whether the personality be interesting or not makes no difference. Advertise the lecturer as the cleverest man in the world and the mob will go to hear him. Announce him as the stupidest man in the world and tickets will be at a premium.

Notoriety is the secret of success, and the method whereby the notoriety be acquired is a matter of no moment. A statesman becomes a world-wide figure because he discovers the Ten Commandments. A minister packs his church because he discovers that sin has not vanished from the world and declares his discovery in terms of spicy personal reminiscence. A publicist attacks the very rich; he defends the very rich; it makes no difference; the result is the same; he gets the crowd.

Jane Maynard learned this basic truth of present civ-

ilization — that advertising brings success — on the day following her remarkable statement to the judge.

In despair, hating to offend so distinguished a public figure as Morton Anderson, yet, by the same token, hating also to offend the general public, he remanded Jane for trial. For, although she was the daughter of distinguished ancestry, to discharge her, when she brazenly flouted the law, was too much. Privately, a little later, when fixing the amount of bail, he told Anderson that he himself should have appeared in Jane's defense and not delegated the task. To which Morton Anderson agreed. But he had preferred to remain somewhat in the background, hoping thus to avoid a distasteful publicity. Further, he had never dreamed that Jane would do otherwise than deny, *in toto*, the testimony of Allen, the plain-clothes man.

But now — at the family council held that evening — he stated his opinion flatly.

"She's insane. But she's been discharged from a sanitarium, and — what are we going to do about it? We can't let her go to jail ——"

To which, of course, the family agreed. Yet, when the next morning, Anderson, carrying a bunch of newspapers, entered the Bland Hendricks Foundation, he found a singularly unalarmed niece.

The news of her arrest, and the reason therefor, had spread over Carey Street and its environs. The Foundation had been packed. Those who had come the night before for the opening returned; they had brought with them their friends; other curious ones had entered.

"What was the game?" one asked of another. Yet there didn't seem to be any. The five hundred dollars was still on the table in the main hall. It was there when the last of the guests had departed; it was there in the morning when Jane came downstairs, to eat of the breakfast

that had been prepared by the colored cook, who, oddly enough, had not quit her job. Pressed for reasons, the colored woman undoubtedly could have given none. She seemed to have lost, somehow, that restlessness of her race. Anyway, she'd try it another day; and the big crowd that came, that pressed into the kitchen, had been enjoyable.

Morton Anderson went directly to the point.

"I've had the office arrange with the district attorney for an immediate trial, Jane. Now, I'm going to take charge, and I want you to do exactly as I tell you. If you do, I can probably get the indictment dismissed."

"I don't want it dismissed," was Jane's amazing response.

Her uncle stared at her. "Why not?"

"I'm not afraid of a trial," she replied.

"Aren't you afraid of jail?" he demanded.

"I won't go to jail," she retorted.

He eyed her pleadingly. "Jane, don't you understand that not even your position, my reputation, your family—that those things don't count before a jury? Have you read the papers this morning?"

She shook her head.

"Read them," he said dryly.

She took them and for half an hour she said nothing, as she ran down the columns of the daily press.

It had been a dull day for news yesterday, and so the affairs of Jane Maynard, which would have had great news value at any time, were given even more space than might have been accorded them on another day.

"A New Creed"; "Jane Maynard Aids Escaped Convict"; "Heiress Released on Bail"; "Settlement House Rendezvous of Thieves." These were the headlines, and the news stories beneath them were no less calculated to thrill an eager public. There were editorials, too. One

dignified journal devoted a column and a half on its editorial page to a discussion of what it termed "Spiritual Bolshevism," severely arraiging the young woman who had said that a world lost to all sense of civic responsibility would be a Christian world.

She smiled as she put the last paper down. Her uncle saw the smile and rose, raging, to his feet.

"Jane," he cried, "don't you take this thing seriously?"

She shook her head, still smiling. "Not at all, Uncle Mort."

"Do you know," he said, "that for two cents I'd forget that you were my niece — let you handle this thing in your own way!"

She looked at him, still smiling. "Why don't you, Uncle Mort? Why should you worry about me?"

He looked at her. Slowly, over his face there spread a grin. "The reason, Jane, is that our family has been so — so *damned* respectable, always. Prosperous, law-abiding, conscious of their position and the duty that position entails. Jane, when I was a little boy, I wanted to be a pirate. My father made a lawyer out of me. I've been successful, but as a pirate I'd have left a name that would have rung down the ages. Jane, I'm not going to let you go to jail if I can help it, but — I'm glad that you don't want help. You're insane; absolutely, unequivocally *crazy*! But you certainly are going to add to the gayety of nations, and you certainly are giving me an opportunity to wage vicarious combat against the forces of organized legality. Jane, I hate a quitter. You won't quit, and — I'm proud of you."

She held out her hand. "Uncle Mort, make all the excuses that you want, but — the real reason is that you believe in what the papers term my new religion. Isn't that the truth?"

He colored. "Not a bit of it; I think that every man, instead of being a potential angel, is a potential devil, but — I like new things, and — and — and" — his face grew fiery now as he picked up the dignified journal that had spoken of "Spiritual Bolshevism" — "I know the blackguard that wrote that article! A damn' miserly, lecherous pup that hates everything decent privately and publicly poses as a champion of all goodness! Why, there's more decency, more Christianity in what you proclaim than there is in all the buncombe that's being preached to-day all over the world."

He wiped his suddenly perspiring forehead with a handkerchief. The girl stared at him.

"Why, Uncle Mort, you *do* believe it."

He met her glance. He shook his head. "Not its practicality, my dear, but — there's been too damned much practicality in this world of ours. And — I backed you with five hundred dollars — I'll back you with more."

A gleam of mischief showed in her eyes. "What will the family say, Uncle Mort?"

"The family," he said with great dignity, "are to know nothing of my private views, Jane. Before them I shall be what I have always been — an upholder of the law. But before you — my God, a man ought to have a little fun in his life. Bring on your thieves, Jane. I want to meet a few of them."

She shook her head. "There aren't any, Uncle Mort. We only think there are."

"Sure," he chuckled. "Only let me have the fun of thinking so. I hate to believe that every one is a poor-spirited worm like myself, afraid to grab anything except through legally established methods. I'll be around to-night. And — I'll rush that trial through, Jane. And — let me defend you."

She smiled once more. "I won't need any defense, Uncle Mort."

Oddly, practical man of the law that he was, he wondered how much truth there was in her assertion. But she wouldn't go to jail — oh, no. Not while Morton Anderson knew a few tricks.

Outside, he mopped his forehead again. He stood a moment on the sidewalk, staring at the doorway, at its legend, "My neighbor is perfect." Certainly, he had not come down here with any intention of backing Jane in her insanity. He had come to command, plead, dissuade. And he had departed leaving encouragement behind him! He was a hard-headed, extremely practical man. Why had he confessed to this niece of his that hampered ambition of youth? Why? He was ashamed of himself. And because he was ashamed he sought for justification.

Well, aside from the fact that she had sheltered an escaped convict, what had Jane done that was so awfully wrong? Even the matter of Montreal Sammy. My word, when you came right down to it, to show pity, charity, wasn't a moral offense, was it? Of course, there was the law. But all law was supposed to be founded on morality. Hadn't Jane a great Example when she showed charity? Morally, there was nothing wrong with her stand. He didn't attend the Foundation that night, however. He was facing a private battle of his own, and he wanted to fight it out in private.

But the rest of the world, all of it that could crowd itself into the small building, came to Carey Street that night. Jane Maynard was the new sensation. A rich girl — public opinion decided that she had inherited millions — a beauty, a social favorite, with a dramatic past recently behind her, with the papers playing her up as the feature news item of the day — curiosity seekers could not refrain from visiting the place.

But they went away more or less disappointed. They had come as people visit the opium dens of Chinatown, in search of sensation. They found none here. Instead they found an orderly throng, whose like might have been found anywhere in the city, differentiated only, perhaps, by a certain placidity that was quite different from what one had a right to expect from people of the slums, of the criminal underworld.

And that ridiculous statement which, as a *sine qua non* of admission, one was compelled to repeat. It was silly, absurd, grotesque, and yet — Those boisterously inclined felt a certain weight pressing upon them that prevented their spirits from asserting that ebullience which they had intended. The place was — eery.

The money, weighted down by a book, upon the table in the main hall — the fact that these poor people seemed, if a little ill at ease, quite evidently not beggars. After all, when you analyzed the thing, it wasn't a crime to think well of your neighbor. The papers had jumped all over a girl who was — well, a peach; nothing less. Smiling, cheerful, gracious sort of peach, too. She welcomed a tatterdemalion with the same air that she greeted a patent millionaire. And when supplies of food ran out, she sent a man, whom every one recognized as a former governor, a howling swell, too, out to a corner delicatessen! And he went, grinning broadly. It was a social function, nothing less. It was something to remember, having seen, hand in hand with people who were obviously of the gutter, people of position, people whose names and pictures were often in the society columns.

Interesting, in that way, but — not sensational. Thus the judgment of the herd. But the newspaper men saw it differently. They saw this gathering at the Bland Hendricks Foundation, upon the day following Jane's hearing before the judge, as a great story. Here was a

girl under indictment who was brazenly flaunting herself before the public, in defiance of its opinion. For the newspapers had rendered opinion and believed that opinion to be the public's.

Carefully they observed all that went on. True, the money on the table remained intact; the Carey Street people who came apparently asked for nothing, even brought their own refreshments. But — that meant nothing except careful, almost brilliant, stage management. There was a scheme behind it all. And what was the scheme?

They got an inkling of it late in the evening when a police officer arrived. He asked for Jane and was greeted cordially by her. And in the hearing of several reporters he said, shamefacedly, "I took Montreal Sammy up the river yesterday, Miss Maynard. He sent you a message; I couldn't get around yesterday, or sooner to-day."

"What was it?" Jane asked.

The officer colored embarrassedly. "He said, ma'am, that he counted on you to get him out of jail."

There was a silence among the newspaper men who overheard the remark, as they waited for Jane's answer. It came, a smiling, confident reply:

"Thank you, officer," she said. "I'll get him out."

That was a flat statement; something on which you could pin a story, something that explained all this hocus-pocus, all this carefully stage-managed appearance of love and confidence that filled the Foundation. Under indictment, awaiting trial, the girl stated that she would get Montreal Sammy out of jail. And he was a "lifer."

It proved that she planned something subversive of the best interests of the State; something in defiance of law and order. And yet, while one was in the room, in the building, one couldn't feel positive of this: one only felt it

after one was outside, away from the hypnotic — that was it, hypnotic — atmosphere of the place.

And so the reporters advertised the Hendricks Foundation the next day. A storm of criticism burst upon the mistress of the new settlement. She had given a basis for attack; she had stated flatly her intention. Of course, it was a ridiculous intention, one impossible of fulfillment, so long as there were laws and men to uphold them, but the more insane a defier of the law is, the more dangerous he, or she, is.

But criticism was advertising. On the next night the throng that strove for admission into the Foundation extended for blocks in either direction from the door. It was a novelty, it was a well-advertised novelty; also, there had been word-of-mouth advertising, the best kind of all. And it differed, strangely enough, from the newspaper versions. Its gist was that the girl was a harmless maniac, a lovely girl, with a queer obsession about the goodness of everyone in the world, and — the funny thing was that while you were in the building you believed it.

So, until the day of the trial, it continued. From Fifth Avenue, and from the dingiest, most remote section of the slums, people came. They came because it was some sort of free show; they came to scoff; but, oddly enough, they did their scoffing outside. While inside the building they were queerly affected.

Everything in the building was free; true, there was little there, but — that five hundred dollars in perfectly good bills was there. Any one could take it; yet, no matter what one's poverty, one felt no inclination to take any of it. And if one were a prosperous person, who had come down there to take this money as a joke, one lost one's sense of humor immediately one had uttered the phrase whereby one gained admission.

It was a miracle; nothing less. So the newspapers

called it. For their attitude had subtly changed in a few days. The newspaper men could not come into daily contact with Jane Maynard without coming to the conclusion that she had no deep scheme; she was a "nut"; but a perfectly harmless and charming one.

They were sorry for her; sorry that she must face a jury trial. Assisting in a convict's escape from jail was a serious charge. They could see no method where she could "beat" the charge. And yet, when her case was called a few days later, the sympathy of the reporters was with her. So was that of the general public. So, it seemed, was that of the jury.

For, when she refused to take the stand, and the prosecution's case closed, the jury, without leaving the box, brought in an immediate verdict of "Not Guilty."

Morton Anderson, who had argued and reasoned with Jane again and had been compelled to offer no defense at all, was stunned. He had hoped for a suspended sentence; had been prepared to carry the case to the highest court. And it wasn't necessary. The jury had looked upon the girl, heard the plain evidence of her flagrant offense, and had let her go.

Why? Because she was charming, lovely? He didn't believe it. Other charming and beautiful women had been found guilty by juries and sent to jail for lesser offenses than Jane's.

Why, then? A million people asked the question. The foreman of the jury answered it in a public statement. For the judge, offended that his instructions to bring in a verdict of guilty had been disobeyed, called the foreman of the jury before him.

"On what ground do you render this absurd verdict?" he demanded.

The foreman passed a hand over his forehead. "I dunno, your honor," he said, "unless she hypnotized us."

CHAPTER XI

HYPNOTISM! Ah, that was something that could be "understood." For had not novels, plays, and films repeatedly informed the world that hypnotism was an existing, definite thing? That no one understood what hypnotism really meant did not matter. As one explains certain natural phenomena by the word "electricity," and satisfies one's auditors, although neither the teller nor the told even vaguely comprehends what electricity is, so the foreman's word solved the puzzle of Jane Maynard.

Persons who had experienced the strange sensation of placidity that enveloped them when they entered the Foundation, and perhaps who had heard or read of that strange sensation, now thought that they comprehended the whole matter. Further, the girl, though apparently quite normal, had been confined in some sort of an asylum or other. Persons who are not quite masters of themselves are popularly credited with certain uncanny powers. One not mistress of oneself can be mistress of others. An absurdity, but ninety per cent. of popular belief is built on no more stable foundation than an absurdity. And this belief became general.

It was acceptable because it stopped thought. The public hates to think. With a vague word or phrase nonunderstandable things are made apparently comprehensible. The public rarely insists upon the question "Why?"

And so, because the matter was settled, Jane Maynard was no longer a sensation. Hypnotism was something one accepted. Let it go at that! Although the judge's

scathing condemnation of the foreman's explanation aroused some newspaper interest, and though certain popularly esteemed scientists gave out interviews on the verdict, the public at large lost interest.

Which pleased Jane. Notoriety was not a thing that pleased her. She had opened the Foundation without the thought entering her head that notoriety would follow. And when, a few days after her discharge from court, the newspapers ceased to comment upon her, she felt a vast relief. For now the Foundation could function, as it could not when every evening brought a throng of visitors who came merely from curiosity.

And now that the newspaper talk had ceased, outsiders did not come. Only those of that slum district in which she had settled dropped in at night. They came in increasing numbers. And each, as he or she entered, repeated the phrase that was printed above the door.

Trouble seemed to drop from their bent shoulders. Unhappy people, crowded into noisesome tenements, became human beings here. And they asked no charity. There was food there, in the Foundation, but they brought it themselves, for the most part.

It was from the lips of John Anstell that Jane learned, for the first time, exactly what she was doing, what she was accomplishing.

The Andersons were a proud folk. They would privately oppose and condemn the actions of one of their own, but publicly they would lift their eyebrows at the slightest hint, from an outsider, that one of the clan had done anything worthy of the slightest criticism.

Jane, their niece and cousin, had been tried in a common court for the commission of a felony. She had been discharged, as the result of a most amazing verdict. Of course, the Andersons — all except Morton, perhaps — would have thought it only "refined" of Jane if she had

disappeared from New York. But when she made it evident that she intended remaining there, intended continuing this queer, uncanny sort of settlement work, the Andersons rallied behind her.

So it was that Jane attended a dinner-dance at the Anderson home. Young, vital, as exquisite upon the dance floor as she was sturdy upon the golf links, dancing was as much a part of her life as it was the part of any young woman of her social sphere. She adored it, to quote herself.

The dinner itself was a comparatively small affair, of a dozen couples, most of them of middle or old age, of unimpeachable position. But the dance that followed, and that was held in the Morton Anderson ballroom, was an affair of seventy-five couples. Here were the younger set, the set to which Jane, by right, belonged. And if a *débutante's* shoulder shrugged, or a youth grinned, it didn't matter. Jane was accepted, as though the past few months and the present had no existence. An Anderson or a Maynard had a right to be crazy or eccentric, had a right, indeed, to do anything except lose his money.

And it was between dances, some time after midnight, that Jane met John Anstell. She was a very human girl; she had refused a duke; nevertheless she felt a certain thrill when one of her cousins presented young Anstell.

A personable enough youth, with fair hair and good strong features, and a well-set-up body, he danced a bit better, perhaps, than any man who is not a professional has a right to dance. Jane became aware of that in the first few strides they took together.

But it was not because of his terpsichorean ability, nor because of anything that was part of himself, that she thrilled. She thrilled because he was the son of Michael Anstell.

For Michael Anstell was the richest man in the world.

There could be no dispute about that statement. There was hardly an industry of any importance in the United States in which Michael Anstell had not his finger. Europe, South America, Africa, Asia — in all of these continents Michael Anstell had interests.

Modern civilization has produced nothing stranger, nothing more important in the final summing up of the age, than the billionaire. For every scientific discovery, every invention, every device that is calculated to free mankind from economic servitude has but the more tightly welded upon mankind the chains of slavery. For the simple reason that men like Michael Anstell have secured possession of these devices. A railroad frees a nation from the necessity of remaining forever in one spot. A Michael Anstell seizes the railroad. The new device has become essential to modern civilization; modern civilization pays tribute to the Anstells.

Nor, despite the cries of those dissatisfied with economic conditions, is the thing wrong. The baby must learn the use of his limbs before he can be trusted to depend upon them. Society is always in a stage of infancy, acquiring new things the use of which must be demonstrated by the strong. The baby outgrows his nurse; surely will a race outgrow its lords and masters.

The son of the richest man in the world! Since time began the possession of things that one's neighbors lack has marked the possessor for envy, for admiration. A monarch holds his place by the whim of his people; but a billionaire holds his place by virtue of laws that are statutory, but that have come to seem economic. A revolution will displace a king; but only a spiritual cataclysm can displace the billionaire.

The most securely placed person in the world, the billionaire. For the king may lose his throne; the singer may lose her voice; the poet his imagination; the artist

his deftness of hand. But the billionaire is as stable as the Rock of Gibraltar. Civilization is founded upon principles that protect him; only his own rashness, his own foolishness, may displace him. And after his fortune has reached a certain point, it automatically protects him against himself.

There was none of the snob in Jane Maynard. But she was human, normal. Wherefore she reacted to the evident interest in her of young Anstell.

For that he was interested would have been patent to any girl at all versed in the ways of men with maids. And Jane had never lacked attention. So, when he came to claim a second dance, and suggested that they sit it out together, she agreed. He fetched an ice and in a corner of the library, off the ballroom, they sat and talked.

"Do you know," he demanded, "what you're doing down on Carey Street?"

She shot a sidewise glance at him. His tone might possibly have been censorious, accusatory.

"Well, what have I been doing?" she countered.

"I'm interested — a little — in charities," he stated.

She nodded. She knew that one great charitable organization drew most of its subsistence from the Anstell fortune.

"You've been abolishing poverty," he said.

She smiled. "Hardly anything as great as that, Mr. Anstell."

"I'm serious," he said. "Of course, permanency is something that — that only permanency can assure, but — in the last fortnight we have found that requests for aid from the Carey Street section have diminished over ninety per cent. That's why I came here to-night."

"To admonish me?" she laughed.

He shook his head. "To talk with you. Further —

in the fortnight before you opened your Foundation, there were ninety-three arrests, for various causes — mostly crimes of minor violence. In the fortnight following the opening, there were, in that neighborhood, exactly fourteen arrests for that sort of violation of the law. What do you make of it? ”

She laughed. “ I don’t know.”

He eyed her. “ You don’t think your Foundation responsible? ”

“ How can I claim such credit for it? There is no proof.”

“ What do you think? ” he asked.

“ I don’t even think. I hope — that’s all,” she told him.

“ And just what do you hope? ” he asked.

She looked at him; unconsciously she drew a long breath. Upon her lovely face, a moment ago alight with excitement from the dance, settled a look of perplexity. “ If you want the truth — I don’t even know that,” she replied. “ I — I’m doing something, Mr. Anstell. But what I’m doing, and why —— ”

“ You don’t know? ”

She shook her head.

“ Yet you preach — a sort of creed,” he ventured.

“ A — sort of one,” she admitted. “ But —— ”

“ Do you believe it? ” he demanded.

“ Believe it? ” She looked at him vaguely, her gray eyes clouded in perplexity.

He nodded. “ Do you, for instance, believe that I, John Anstell, am perfect? ”

Suddenly she smiled. “ You dance perfectly, Mr. Anstell.”

He frowned slightly. “ Please be serious with me.”

She became suddenly mocking. “ Why — with you? ”

“ Because — Miss Maynard, you know who and what

I am. My father's son. The ought-to-be successor to his work. But in reality — you know what."

"No, I don't," she replied.

"Well, it's sweet of you not to phrase it," he said. "A wastrel, an idler — because I don't care about my father's money; because I really don't care much if he loses most of it."

"Most of it?" she asked.

He grinned. "I wouldn't want him to lose all. Playing at work — I can at least make an occasional pretense. But to be compelled to for my living — I wouldn't like that."

She stirred uneasily. She was of that age when serious conversation, at dances, at any rate, is shunned. It was enough to be serious down on Carey Street; to be serious at this function to-night —

"You malign yourself, Mr. Anstell. You say that you are an idler — yet you seem to know about — things down on Carey Street."

He shrugged. "My father exacts a certain obedience. He finances a charity organization — he wants to know the results. He shifts me about to suit his pleasure — not that I'm condemning father. Lord, no! I am an undutiful son, but — he's all right. But my happening to know about the charity and police reports is due to the fact that I'm spending a few hours daily at the charity headquarters — sheerest accident. Come back to my question. Do you think I'm perfect?"

It was not the best-mannered question that had ever been put to her. Yet she had, in a way, laid herself open to rudeness. If one adopts an eccentric way of living, or even way of thinking, one must expect a certain lack of suavity in others.

She had been thinking, when definitely she thought at all about the Foundation to whose establishment and

maintenance she was committed, in terms of Montreal Sammy and the like. To see these as perfect. But her social equals, the persons with whom she must have certain relationships that lacked the paternalism — or maternalism — of her attitude toward the derelicts of the world, were something different.

She became suddenly conscious of the fact that this impertinent question, put by a good-looking youth to whom she was attracted, was making her, for the first time, reduce that abstract formula of hers to something concrete. Was she a hypocrite? Was she, indeed, hypnotized by her own words? She had smiled amusedly at the foreman's statement in court; she had been amused at the newspaper decision that she undoubtedly had exerted some mental influence upon the jury. But now — just how far did she believe in her creed, that creed which was printed above the doorway of the Foundation, whose four simple words must be uttered by every one who sought admittance?

At last, after weeks of mental bewilderment, weeks in which she had sometimes thought of herself as whimsical, sometimes — a little affrightedly — as being guided by the spirit of a person dead, and sometimes as perhaps, after all, no more sane than some people thought her, she suddenly knew that she believed! Haziness left her; mental chaos became reduced to orderliness; she looked sanely, clearly, upon the world.

"I do indeed, Mr. Anstell," she told him. "I believe you are perfect."

He stared at her. His good-humored face suddenly colored; yet, although he blushed, he grinned, too. And before she could guess his purpose, his hand went around her waist, he drew her to him, and he kissed her.

For a moment she lay quiescent in his arms; then, slowly, she released herself. He had expected instant

struggle, instant indignation; instead he was met with a calm dignity quite different from what he had expected.

"Why did you do that?" she demanded.

He tried to be brazen. "You can't mind being kissed by a perfect man, Miss Maynard," he said. Yet the humor left his heart.

She shrugged. "I don't suppose that I ought to, Mr. Anstell. Perhaps — it is because I am not perfect myself."

But within her, though, with the aplomb of modern youth that refuses to concede that any act can make it lose its self-possession, she was apparently calm, she was a burning flame of wrath. To be kissed was nothing terrible; no pretty girl may entirely avoid it; but to be kissed sneeringly, contemptuously — She felt no wrath toward him; only a wrath for herself, a blistering and withering self-contempt that she was the kind who could be subjected to such insult.

He leaned toward her; it had piqued him that so pretty and charming a girl should leave the environment to which she was so suited for a slum district like Carey Street. Before he met her, he had decided that all the tales of her good looks were false; no pretty girl could condemn herself to religious nonsense. And so he had made sport of her.

But the touch of her lips upon his own had had that peculiar effect which even the advance of modern science has been unable to explain by other than such vague phrases as "race impulse" and the like. He suddenly felt ashamed of himself, sorry, wanting to ask forgiveness.

"That was rotten of me," he said. "I shouldn't have done it. I — I'm sorry, Miss Maynard."

She smiled; it was a faintly quavering smile. No one had kissed her mockingly before. Many a man had

pleaded for the favor of her lips; a few had stolen the favor; none had sneered at her.

"It doesn't matter," she said. "Shall we — go in?"

She rose, but stubbornly he remained seated. "Miss Maynard, if we go in there now" — he nodded toward the dancing floor — "you won't speak to me again; you'll think that I always — Miss Maynard, can I — is there any way that I can — well, square it?"

She looked at him; on her lips still hovered that faintly tremulous smile, a smile that made him want to grovel at her feet. She held out her hand. What a silly matter! To feel a grievance because a young man jeered at her. She laughed inwardly at herself.

"You may square it," she said, "by taking me home."

"You'll let me?" he stammered.

"I want you to," she told him.

Now, men are subjected in various ways; some by wrath; some by surrender; and some by a handsome generosity. It was this latter, joined to many other things, such as frank gray eyes, masses of brown hair, a lithe and lovely figure, that subdued John Anstell. He had come caddishly; what had inspired him to his insolence he did not know; he only knew that he was ashamed, that he was not the sort of man who insulted pretty girls, and that he wanted her to know it. He didn't know that he could no more have helped kissing her than he could have stemmed Niagara's torrent. For we think that we are rude, bold, when we are slaves to impulses older than civilization. We think that we are cads, when we are thralls of motives that make races. It would never occur to him, because he was a simple, frank soul, that she might have resisted the kiss earlier; it never occurred to her that she might have done so. She also was a pawn in a game bigger than herself, a game that Nature plays.

And so, gravely, having left the dance long before its

ending, they went down into the slums together. But five blocks from Carey Street a policeman halted them. They descended from the car to find themselves on the outskirts of an anguished mob, who vainly stormed the police lines beyond which were engines, hose carts, and all that paraphernalia wherewith man fights the flames. For the whole neighborhood was ablaze. All, except, as the policeman informed them, one house — the Hendricks Foundation, which was almost unsinged.

"A plain miracle, ma'am, nothing less," said the officer.

That was what the papers called it in the morning. A miracle! The first victory, though Jane did not know it, in the conquest of the world!

CHAPTER XII

A MIRACLE! Back in the dim ages man fought for his livelihood in response, so science tells us, to the impulse for self-preservation. His gnawing stomach, his parched throat, his shivering limbs: these are the things that impelled him to battle, struggle, against beasts of the forest, against nature, and against his own kind.

But one travels back to the primal impulse, listens to science, and turns away, unconvinced.

Why did man not do as other beasts, succumb to each attack, existing only by mere chance, as other beasts existed? Was it because he possessed some gleam of reasoning power, or was it because there was in his soul some consciousness of the fact that he was made in the image of his Maker; and did he feel that because of the likeness he was compelled to preserve himself, perpetuate himself? Was he, unknown to his mentality, fulfilling a spiritual obligation?

For, from the very beginning, man seems to have been conscious of some ruling power above himself, some power that is stronger than the bodily appetite. And so, because he was conscious of that power, he attributed to it the reason for those things which he did not understand. And by and by he came to call them miracles.

Anything which violated the natural laws, as man understood those laws, became miracles. But what was miraculous yesterday is the commonplace of to-day. What violated natural law a decade ago supports it to-day.

And so, if one understands that every act has an ex-

planation, there are no miracles. There are things that we do not understand, but that they are supernatural is absurd. Indeed, there is nothing supernatural; there are things beyond our present understanding, but nothing beyond our future understanding.

But the newspapers chose to call the sparing by the flames of the Hendricks Foundation a miracle.

As a matter of fact, even when the extremely practical chief of the Fire Department pointed out that the lack of height of the Foundation had caused the flames to leap across it, from one tall tenement to another, the public and papers still believed that something greater than natural laws had prevented destruction of the building.

For another few days the press kept Jane in the public eye. Then, because other extraordinary events attracted attention, she was again temporarily forgotten.

As for Jane herself, she was content to accept the fire chief's explanation. Miracle or not — it didn't matter. There were homeless to be sheltered and hungry to be fed. Toward these works she bent her energies, her time, and her money.

It was a frightful scene of devastation and agony upon which she and John Anstell had entered when the name of Jane Maynard, coupled with the policeman's recognition of Anstell, passed them through the fire lines.

It had been one of those incredibly swift conflagrations that seem to burn themselves out by their own ferocity, as anger sometimes ceases because the human heart can stand no more emotion.

Like a new broom, the blaze had swept clean. Where had stood tall, unsightly, dingy tenements were now ashes and charred débris. But these ruins were less offensive than what had been before. And it was toward the replacement of this wreckage that Jane turned her

efforts when the first few days of caring for the immediate needs of the homeless had passed.

New York is the most charitable city in the world. Like an overgrown, immature child is New York. It can be brutal, cold, cruel — because it is thoughtless. But it can be as impulsively generous as that child. It was so now; the homeless of the Foundation neighborhood were taken care of. Oddly, there was never an application for shelter in the Foundation itself that could not be granted. The few bedrooms that were there proved ample. She had told her uncle that, some time ago, not knowing how soon her words would be put to the proof. Yet, for some reason that she did not analyze, the poor of the neighborhood did not flock, as might have been expected, to the Carey Street house. At a time when its facilities might have been overtaxed, it was as though facilities had been expanded. Yet they had not. This, perhaps, was the real miracle.

Another was the attitude of John Anstell. He had not been generous in his estimate of himself as he had given it to Jane. Nor, perhaps, had he understated the facts too greatly. A likable, pleasant young fellow, with more than his share of brains, he had never used those brains. But now, during these days of rehabilitation of the fire sufferers, he showed himself possessed of an executive ability that attracted the attention of his father. The newspapers had not hesitated to couple the name of the billionaire's son with that of the girl who had figured so frequently in the press of late. It made good reading, even though there was no implication of romance in the stories.

For he raised money; he arranged for the turning over of an armory for the shelter of the homeless; he set to work those agencies of charity which his father controlled. And the papers praised him.

Old Michael Anstell read — and was pleased. Also he was puzzled. During a college course, during the few years that had elapsed since his graduation, young Anstell had shown nothing of his father in him. At least, so Michael Anstell thought. For it had been the old man's ambition to set his son securely in his place, that the piling up of millions might not hesitate even for a single moment.

But, instead, his son's ambition had been to scatter the millions. Not that he'd been a spendthrift, but he'd seen no particular use in further accumulation. It was different now, mused the old man, reading the clipping which his secretary gave him. And so he sent for his son.

Their greeting was affectionate enough. The old man, in a furtive way, loved his son. John was openly admiring toward his father. But there had never been between them any of that parental and filial warmth which compensates some others for their lack of millions.

A billionaire has little time for the amenities. Michael Anstell's information concerning his son came not from personal acquaintance and observation, but from formal reports that had been drawn up by nurses, governesses, tutors, college professors, employees under whom John had started his financial career. Flesh of the same flesh, they were strangers.

Nevertheless, because John had been showing some executive ability, Michael Anstell's hopes for a successor to his own career suddenly revived. He received his son in an interval between directors' meetings. They shook hands formally and John remained standing.

"Sit down, John," said his father.

The younger man sat down.

"Nice weather," commented Michael.

John grinned. Always, when the two met, there was that atmosphere of constraint, of mutual embarrassment,

that was indicated by preliminary remarks upon the weather or some other banal topic.

"Glad you approve of it, father," he said.

The bushy brows of Michael Anstell, that in moments of complete relaxation almost met, now drew together. His lips pursed slightly. He never fully understood this son of his. There seemed to him, frequently, to be a certain jocosity that hinted of disrespect in his son's manner and speech.

"My approval," he said stiffly, "has nothing to do with the weather."

"You concede that, eh?" asked John.

But his impertinence was robbed of offense by the boyish grin that accompanied it.

His father smiled faintly, but the world really was too serious a place for smiles. There were billions of money in the world that did not belong to Michael Anstell; there were coal mines, oil fields, steamship lines, railroads, ranches, factories that belonged to other people. In the time that one spent in relaxing in a smile, one might make money; the concentration of one's mind was seriously interrupted if one permitted one's thoughts to dwell upon humorous matters. For the matter of that, there was nothing humorous in the world anyway. To his son, though, he would make concessions. Hence the slight twisting of his lips.

"Getting better reports about you, John," said the old man.

The young man eyed the elder. His gaze traveled over the semibald head, over the face with the strong, hooked, knife-edged nose, the broad nostrils, the thin wide mouth, the lean pointed chin, the wrinkled throat with its protruding Adam's apple, the well-set-up, still vigorous body.

John sighed faintly. "Father," he said quietly, "why take other people's reports about me? Why not get ac-

quainted with me and find out for yourself? It might be interesting — for both of us."

The older man colored faintly. "Been reading the papers. Found out more about you in the last week than all the tutors and secretaries I've ever had could tell me." His voice was gruff, and came queerly from that lean throat. One expected a shrill and quavering tone; one heard instead a heavy bass voice. The voice matched the deeds of the man, not the physique.

"I'm glad that you like what you've found out, father," said John.

The old man's eyes were suddenly piercing. "How intimate are you with that Maynard girl, John?"

"Miss Maynard?" The son smiled. "I don't believe that I'm as close to her now as I was the first time I met her, father. Why?"

Michael Anstell leaned back in his chair and brought the tips of his fingers together. "I ain't interfered — much, have I, John?"

The young man shook his head. "Not nearly so much as you would have been quite right in doing, father," he said frankly.

"Never whined around when you went through the show-girl, cocktail phase, eh, son?"

Young Anstell shook his head. It was his turn to color now, and he did so.

"Never objected to any reasonable amount of hell-raisin', eh? No, I didn't. You know it. When I got reports that you weren't any twin-six in the jobs I've set you I never bawled you out. Gave you plenty of money, eh, son?"

"You've been very generous, father."

"Thought you'd say so. Never kicked about anything. You admit it. All right, I'm going to do a little kicking now."

John sat down. He put his elbows on his father's desk.

"Shoot," he said.

"You don't seem worried," said his father.

The boy's grin was broad. "Well, it may help in getting acquainted, father."

"You seem to harp on that subject, son," said the old man. "Just remember something. I've had pretty important work on my hands since long before you were born. This getting acquainted is all right — wish it could have been done — but no son of mine is a sentimental fool; he ought to understand — well, what I'm kicking about is this: Leave the Maynard girl alone."

A casual observer would have thought that the young man received the advice, or warning, as equably as he would have received word that some one wanted him on the telephone. But his father was no casual observer to-day. He noted the sudden narrowing of his son's eyes, the faint whitening of his knuckles as his hands clenched.

"What do you mean — leave her alone?" demanded John.

"What I say. You heard me."

"Yes, perfectly," was the reply. "But — do you thoroughly understand just what sort of girl Miss Maynard is?"

"That's why I'm telling you to leave her alone."

"Then suppose," ventured John, "that you tell me what sort you think her? You know, of course — you've been reading the papers, you say — that her family is as good as any in America; that she herself ——"

"Is crazy," interrupted Michael.

"You haven't talked with her, father," said the son. The tension of his fingers, the narrowing of his eyes, were gone now. He smiled confidently.

"Don't have to," said the old man.

"Let me tell you about her," suggested John.

"You've heard my orders," said Michael.

"Orders? As strong as all that, father? I'm of age, you know."

"I know all about that, John. Listen to me: the newspapers have been filled with talk about you and this girl — how you're working together to rehabilitate Carey Street —"

"Any harm in that?" demanded his son.

"Not a bit. Don't I support a few charities myself?"

"You do. I've wondered why — often," said John.

"Then you got less sense than I gave you credit for," said the old man. "You ain't watched my career for the past twenty years. About then I got tired of the papers hammering me all the time."

"So you bought some papers, eh?" smiled John.

His father nodded; again he almost paid the utterance the tribute of a smile. "Couldn't buy them all, son. But a million invested in charity will keep two million dollars' worth of bad advertising out of the papers. You know, if a man gives a lot of money to help the poor, it ain't reasonable to suppose that he robs the poor, eh? Besides, I make my charities efficient. They help to do away with poverty. My charity concerns look out for jobs for the poor. But never mind all that. You've been looking over the organization — you see what it does; maybe, in spite of the fact you just wondered why I maintained it, you guessed the reason."

"I did — in a way. But I didn't like to think that I'd guessed rightly," said John.

"And that's another reason I want you to keep away from this Maynard girl. Ideas. A woman can put more

dam'fool ideas in a man's head than twenty surgeons can extract. You going to cut her out?"

John smiled again. "She relies on me—in a way, father. You wouldn't want me to cut her out, as you put it, right away?"

The old man leaned across the desk. "You ain't gone and got yourself engaged to her — no nonsense like that, eh?"

"She wouldn't have me, I'm afraid, father," was John's reply.

The old man laughed. "Refuse an Anstell? Guess again, son. She'd jump at you."

"You don't know her, father," said John.

"No, and I don't want to. She's crazy. All this sappy stuff she's spreading—it's bad business. The papers ought not to print it. Wrong idea—entirely. Make loafers of people—bums, tramps! Crazy woman's idea. Ain't she been in an asylum?" he asked sharply.

"In a rest cure," admitted John.

"Same thing. Cut her out. Hear me?"

"I hear you, father."

"Well—going to obey me?"

John grinned. "Do you really expect me to, father?"

Old Anstell curtly rang a bell. "That'll be all for to-day, John."

"You haven't mentioned your will, father, and you haven't said a word about discontinuing my allowance—nothing of that sort."

"Ain't going to," said his father. "Always play fair with you, John. Just wanted to find out if you were in love with this crazy woman."

"Well, did you?" asked John.

"I said that was all, son," said Michael Anstell as he turned to the secretary who had answered his ring.

CHAPTER XIII

MICHAEL ANSTELL did not understand his son; to himself he conceded that. The concession was accompanied by no regret. He was a busy man, with a tremendous work still ahead of him. If some one had asked him what the great work was all about, what it led to, he would have been unable to answer coherently. But he would have felt that his questioner was an imbecile.

For he had reached that stage in achievement when he had begun to think of himself as one divinely appointed to stewardship of the world and the things thereof. He knew that there must be a reason for everything, a cause, or a purpose. But he did not apply this knowledge to himself. Perhaps, if he could have phrased it, he would have accounted for himself as one of the great natural forces. For there is no vanity equal to that of the man who had amassed a fortune, and the greater the fortune the greater the vanity.

But Anstell was asked no question, and therefore was compelled to answer none. Perhaps it is best to say that he simply took himself for granted. He *was*. Therefore what he did was right.

If he had ever missed that companionship of father and son which is the privilege of the least of humans, his closest friend — had he possessed such a thing — would never have been able to guess it. For his furtive love for John was something ever kept in the background and subordinated always to his work.

His work! It was because of his work that he had sent for John to-day. The newspapers had informed him of

the work of Jane Maynard and John. Of late he had been thinking that it was about time that John quit being a dilettante at business, and be intrusted with great schemes. He was ready, so Michael Anstell thought.

But sometimes it is not the desire to achievement alone that spurs a man on. Sometimes a woman is involved. Which was all very well, provided that the woman was acceptable to Michael.

Jane Maynard was not acceptable. She was mentally unbalanced. So Michael had decided, and his decisions were almost always unchangeable. She would not do as the wife of John, as the daughter-in-law of Michael, as the mother of future Anstells.

But if he didn't fully understand the individual, John Anstell, he understood extremely well men in general. He was a reader of character, of hidden emotions and thoughts, to a degree that would have made him a marvelous practitioner of the new pseudo-science of psycho-analysis.

He had sent for John because he thought him ready for what Michael would have termed "big things," and also to make a discovery concerning his son. He had made the discovery; the "big things" would be postponed for a while.

As he had said, he had never interfered with his son while the young man had been sowing his extremely modest crop of wild oats. He had never been harsh. He would not be so now. But it was not because he wished to play fair, as he had said, with that engaging appearance of frankness that had been so great a business asset to him; it was because he knew that opposition, whether financial or otherwise, would have an effect contrary to that which he hoped for.

To order his son to "cut the girl out" was all very well. But to enforce that order by ordaining a financial

stringency was to mobilize every atom of stubborn opposition in the young man's heart and mind. Michael Anstell had not bent legislatures, peoples, to his will without learning a certain shrewdness. He would do nothing so crude as to attempt an open enforcement of his order.

There were, as he knew so well, so many ways of skinning a cat that one could take one's choice. There were as many ways of making love's young fancy look the other way.

But, in love as in politics, there is one weapon more potent than any other, and that is ridicule. It was the weapon that Michael Anstell would use.

He had discovered that John was in love with Jane Maynard. Possibly John had not yet made that discovery. His father didn't care; he knew, and he felt himself far more vitally concerned than John could have been.

For the piled-up billions of Michael Anstell would exist, he hoped, until the end of time. Only one thing could dissipate them, and that thing was a bad strain in the blood. He, Michael Anstell, could not dictate the matrimonial alliances of his unborn grandchildren, but he could take care that his own son made no mistake. And Jane Maynard's blood was bad; the girl was crazy.

He had sent for his secretary merely to induce a speedier departure of his son. Now, leaning back in his swivel chair, his keen eyes half closed, he pondered the situation.

Make her ridiculous! But how? A dozen schemes presented themselves to him, but were dismissed. They were schemes that might fail, might indeed arouse the chivalry of John. But finally he came upon the one that suited him, and he telephoned the office of the *Morning Blade*, one of those newspapers which, more or less sub rosa, he controlled. He spoke to the publisher and asked

him, if he had a moment to spare, to drop over to his office.

Ten minutes later the publisher was ushered into the room. Michael Anstell was at the window, staring out upon a marvelous view of harbor and bay. Towering liners churned the waters into foam; trains, made tiny by distance, crawled across a great bridge that flung itself high above a busy stream; from his eighteenth-story window he could look down upon the streets and see the ants that were human, hurrying hither and thither, with apparent aimlessness. He turned away, with a queer sense of elation. He made these people walk about, caused their trains to crawl across bridges and through tunnels; the liners sailed at his behest.

He held out his hand to Simmonson, the publisher. Simmonson's sigh of relief was almost audible. When Michael Anstell sent for his employees they usually trembled. There was no mercy in his code; a man succeeded or he failed. There were no shades of success, no measures of failure. And a daily paper is a tremendous institution. Scores of items appear in each issue, and only one of them might perhaps tread on the sacrosanct corns of sacred toes.

Anstell came right down to business; he was never a man to waste time on what he contemptuously termed palaver. "This Jane Maynard; know her?" he demanded brusquely.

Simmonson looked slightly bewildered. "You mean the ——" He hesitated. From Anstell's tone he could not tell whether or not the billionaire held the lady in favor or disfavor.

"The religious maniac," said Anstell.

Simmonson took his cue, "Not personally, of course," he said. "But we've printed so much about her ——"

"Print more; lots more," said Anstell.

Simmonson nodded doubtfully. "She's pretty dead, speaking from a news standpoint," he said.

"Revive her," ordered Anstell. "Make a joke of her; make her the most ridiculous person in New York."

The publisher pursed his lips. "She's been doing a — people think that she's — er — accomplishing certain good —"

"It's what I think that dictates the *Blade's* policy," said Anstell curtly. "I want her made a laughing-stock. Don't care how you do it. Do it!" He stared a moment at his subordinate. "Any questions?" he demanded.

Simmonson shook his head. Anstell, according to his custom, rang a bell, to indicate that the interview was over, and Simmonson left. Outside, and on his way back to the *Blade* office, he put to himself the questions that he had been too wise to put to Anstell. For Anstell tolerated no one who questioned his reasons. He cared only for men who did as they were told. Simmonson had risen to a pleasant competence by observation of this fact.

And in his own office Simmonson became the dictator. He sent brusquely for his managing editor.

"Campaign against Jane Maynard, the slum heroine," he said briefly, with a fair imitation of Anstell's own brusqueness. "Make a joke of her. Laugh her out of business."

"She's not news," objected the managing editor.

Simmonson lighted a cigar. "Make her news," he said shortly.

In the managing editor's office the same comedy was rehearsed again, with the editor now playing the leading rôle, and the city editor taking the minor part. Five minutes after that interview closed the city editor crooked a finger and called, "Oh, Barnett, just a minute."

A slim youth, with a downward twist at one corner of his mouth that lent him an expression unpleasantly sar-

donic, rose from the chair before a typewriter, in which he was tilted back. He dropped a cigarette upon the floor and ground his heel upon it. One noticed then, as he stood, that he was slightly lame.

He walked over to the city editor's desk. The comedy was not rehearsed again. City editors have to drive their men, on occasion, and the martinet does not always get the best work. Barnett lounged against the desk.

"Well, sucker, what's on your soul?" he demanded.

"Not a thing in the world but sin," replied his chief.

"Well, don't tell me about it," said the reporter. "I'm not hearing confessions to-day."

The city editor grinned cynically. The reporter's words conjured up a picture of him in vestments. And Tom Barnett was probably the least saintly man on Park Row.

"Maynard girl — Jane Maynard. Want a couple of columns about her."

Barnett stared at him. "What's the idea? Don't you think the public are sick and tired of hearing about her?"

"I do," agreed the chief. "But we want to make her sick and tired of hearing about herself. Get the wee distinction, my little man?"

Barnett smiled. He leaned more intimately against the desk and lighted another cigarette. "Orders from the high mogul himself, old M. A., eh?"

"Did I say so?" countered the other.

"I read the papers," said Barnett. "So — the old boy doesn't like his angel child running around with his little playmate?"

"Little mind reading?" asked the city editor, heavily sarcastic.

"Newspaper reading, I said," chuckled Barnett. "Old M. A. is as subtle as a steam roller, isn't he?"

"Don't you want the assignment, Tom?" asked the editor.

"Hasty, hasty," chided the reporter. His thin face, nearly always gloomy, lighted. "Sure, I want it."

"Then go to it," said the editor. "Begin to-night. Mark your copy 'must.'"

The reporter whistled. "As important as all that, eh? Fair enough. I'll hand this town the laugh of a generation. God knows it needs one these days."

He limped off, his smile wrinkling his sunken cheeks, making his mouth even more distorted. A few minutes later and he was in the "morgue," that department of a newspaper where clippings are stored away in envelopes, and was slumped in a great chair, reading over Jane Maynard's newspaper record.

There was enough there, he assured himself, after a couple of hours, for a hundred laughs. He wondered that she had escaped ridicule as well as she had. If he ran a newspaper according to his light, he'd ridicule everybody and everything. Of course, he didn't get her graft, — he'd admit that. But he would get it. He'd enjoy getting it. If there was anything in the world that made him ill, sickened him to his very soul, it was the religious bunk that people swallowed. Boobs, fools, come-ons!

He had some respect for preachers, but for the saps who sat in the pews and ate up the hocus — The preacher got something for his work; he drew a salary at least, and probably dipped his hand into the foreign-mission collections. But the man or woman who slipped his hard-earned money into the poor box, — they were fooled because they wanted to be fooled, and they got none of his sympathy.

At that, though, this Jane Maynard must be a deep one. He felt a certain admiration for her. Of course,

it was obvious what she was after. She'd been biding her time, waiting for the real money, and now she'd got her hooks into young Anstell. And papa was fighting for his baby boy. Well, much as he despised and hated old Anstell, he, Tom Barnett, would aid him this time. If it had been a chorus girl who'd grabbed off the young fellow, Barnett would have quit his job rather than hurt her chances. But a religious faker—— Even an old robber like Michael Anstell deserved better luck for his son than that.

He was a mean little man, was Tom Barnett. Nature had been unkind to him. He had been born with a limp in one leg, and the limp had got into his soul. Unable to defend himself from other boys with his hands, Tom Barnett, in youth, had made a weapon of his tongue. In manhood that vitriolic tongue still functioned, but not so frequently, for an outlet for his mordant wit had been provided by his typewriter.

He wrote a scathing sort of humor that had swiftly brought him to high place in his profession. Politicians who were trying to "put something over," pretentious persons of all kinds, were fair game for him. The fact that it was necessary to edit his copy carefully, with a keen realization of the libel laws, did not affect his value. He could "lighten up" any page, on almost instant notice. And, in addition to his humorous gifts, he was a writer of ability, with a sense for word values that lifted him well out of the rut.

It was an assignment after his own heart. The fact that a girl was to be his victim made no appeal to his sense of chivalry. He had, he boasted, no illusions about the other sex. He believed that every woman, like every man, had her price, and that, in most cases, the price was extremely low.

So it was with not the slightest feeling of shame or re-

luctance that he entered the Foundation about eight o'clock that evening. With a grin he complied with the necessary utterance, and stated that his neighbor was perfect. Then, thinking that the statement would afford a good opening sentence for his story later in the evening — a variety of changes could be rung upon the phrase — he entered the main hall.

It was thronged, but he managed to wedge himself well down toward a table behind which sat Jane Maynard, whom he recognized at once from the newspaper pictures which he had studied earlier in the day.

He had entered, so it seemed, in the middle of a meeting. For the girl was speaking.

"As I said," she apparently repeated, "some of you here to-night thought that we should hold some sort of thanksgiving service. You have been through an ordeal; you have seen your homes and possessions destroyed by fire. And yet — you have not suffered. Those of you who lost all have discovered that you lost nothing. For nothing is important save faith in your fellow man. If you have that, you have everything. And we all have that." She looked around at her auditors. Reluctantly Barnett was conscious that she was even prettier than her photographs. Smilingly she added, "Haven't we?"

There was a murmur of response from the gathering. Barnett looked at their faces. There was on them all that odd expression of calm that had puzzled so many other newspaper men, that had been so widely commented on in the press in recent days. But he understood it. Cows looked contented, placid, and cows were the most notoriously stupid of all animals. These were cowlike humans.

"Is there any particular fashion in which you think our thanks should be expressed?" asked the girl.

Formality left the meeting then. Groups gathered,

arguing, though in the friendliest fashion. And Barnett took the opportunity to approach the girl.

"My name is Barnett — of the *Morning Blade*," he told her.

She held out her hand, grimacing slightly. "More advertising, Mr. Barnett?"

"You want it, don't you?" he asked brusquely. He was conscious that her hand gripped his like a man's, although it was velvet to his touch.

She shook her head. "Indeed not. Unless ——" She paused.

"Unless what?" he asked.

"There's been so much talk about me," she said. "If you'd write about the people here — how human they are, how deserving — wouldn't you like to look around, Mr. Barnett?"

He would, and did. Mingling among the people, he questioned them, heard their statements about their new-found contentment. And more and more he began to be impressed with the fact that he couldn't solve the reason for the girl's establishment of the place. She was preaching bunk; he recognized that. And she'd interested young Anstell. But she hadn't started this thing on the off chance that a loose-brained young millionaire might become interested in her scheme and that his interest might become personal. And she was too clear-eyed, too keen-brained, to believe in her own ideas. It was a monumental graft, and it irked him that he couldn't put his finger on the graft.

He was descending the stairs, having toured the upper part of the house, when a child of ten or twelve, just ahead of him, stumbled and pitched to the floor. Like a flash Barnett ran down the stairs and picked the youngster up. The child smiled; he was quite unhurt. The reporter put him down.

"You want to be careful, kid," he said. "You might become lame, from a fall like that — just like me," he added bitterly.

And then, suddenly, he fell against the wall, his face white, his mouth moving soundlessly. For he had been lame since his birth, twenty-eight years ago, and his lameness was such a part of him that he hardly thought of it. Now, suddenly, he realized that he had run downstairs without a trace of a limp. It was incredible, fearsome, somehow. He stared down at his knee. He put his foot out; he walked across the hall. *He was not lame.*

The child cried out as he pitched forward, fainting.

CHAPTER XIV

ALMOST in the shadow of Police Headquarters was a saloon. It was a place that was reminiscent of braver days, before the great fear had spread over the country. For, prate as we will of the growth of righteousness, it is fear that inspires the blue laws. If not fear for ourselves, fear for our sons, our brothers, our husbands or our wives.

Fear! It is the most dominant trait in all the animal kingdom, to which man, as yet, belongs. Navies and armies, policemen and unofficial guardians of the moralities and legalities of others: fear brings them into action, and fear keeps them there.

But here, near Police Headquarters, the fear had not permeated. Ahead of the denizens of this place were possibly restrictions on their tobacco, on their methods of employing time on Sundays, on their manner of dress — Heaven alone knows what is ahead of all of us! This much we may be sure of: reform is like fire; it consumes everything inflammable, then finally burns itself out. Like disease, it attacks a community, a people, and for a time seems triumphant; but at last, worn out by its own conquests, it vanishes.

But down here the fear had not yet crept in. The singing waiter, relic of a bygone day, tunefully served liquor to the patrons. A large bouncer stood ready to eject the quarrelsome. But these last were not many. The procuring of liquor was too difficult for a man to jeopardize his source of supply by making himself offensive to the dispenser thereof. Peace and comparative

quiet reigned in this resort when Tom Barnett dragged himself wearily inside.

For he was weary; weary of mind and heart as well as body. He was as one who has seen all the beliefs of a lifetime shattered at one blow.

He had aroused from his faint to find himself in a room upstairs, attended by a vision whom at first he did not recognize as Jane Maynard. For he had looked at her with cynical unbelieving eyes which had found her good-looking, perhaps, but, searching for the evidences of crookedness, had discounted even her good looks. They had not interested him. Now, queerly, they did.

But he had remained under her ministrations only a moment. Almost as soon as he regained his senses, he insisted on arising. She, who only knew that this was a reporter from the *Blade*, accepted at once his explanation, offered most apologetically, that he'd been suffering from the after effects of influenza. She waved his apologies aside. And, because she was tactful, she left him as soon as he had recovered.

He had sat for fully ten minutes on the edge of the upstairs couch to which he had been carried, before he moved. His sunken cheeks were flushed, and the twisted corner of his mouth was no longer sardonic; it twitched as though with fear.

It was with fear. For his fear of something non-understandable had crept into his heart while he had been unconscious. His eyes had not deceived him, or, if they had, his other senses had not. He had walked without a limp. Slowly, as he sat there, controlling his racing brain by the most violent effort of his will, he examined into the happening.

A child had stumbled on the stairs, had fallen. And he had leaped to pick the child up. Thereafter he had discovered that his knee was cured. Now, then, what

could have caused that cure? He knew of cases where paralytics, under the stress of some great emotion, had leaped from bed. He knew that at St. Anne de Beaupré, in Canada, there had been well-authenticated cases of cripples who had thrown away their crutches. The same thing had happened at the shrine of Lourdes, in France. These things were confirmable by absolute proof; they had happened.

Why, then, could not the same thing have happened, in the same way, to himself? Excited by the fall of the child —— A great ague took hold of him. If the cure were permanent —— He dared not put it to the test. To rise, letting his weight fall upon that weak knee —— Great beads of sweat came to his forehead; the inside of his hands were wet; he felt his collar giving as he threw back, as though for breath, his head; it gave because perspiration had made it limp. Shaking, trembling, his heart racing in panic, he rose from the couch.

Then he laughed. For the weak knee gave beneath his weight. He'd been hysterical, crazy, a boob! He'd imagined something and the imagining had scared him into a faint. He lighted a cigarette and the hand that held the match was suddenly steady. He grinned at himself; he was relieved because he *was* a cripple.

But after he'd limped downstairs and outside, not waiting to thank his hostess for her attention, and had started for the subway that would convey him to the *Blade* office, he began to wonder. He knew himself. He was as cool and collected a person as he knew. He'd never been the least bit emotional. All his life he'd been sardonic, distrustful. *Something had happened to him!* What had it been?

For the first time in his life he found that his thoughts were incoherent. By this time, ordinarily, he would have phrased his opening paragraph, would have thought

of half a dozen pungent sentences to incorporate into his story. But to-night he could think of nothing. He could focus his thoughts only upon that amazing moment before he had fainted.

There was a cause for everything. What had been the cause of this? It was *not enough* to say that the house had been warm; that he was off his feed; that he had, through some queer and unaccountable physical disorder, been a victim to a hallucination. That would do for other people. Had some friend of his told him a story to match this, he'd have attributed the man's statements to a stomach trouble, to a disorder of the eye, to some ailment of the mind itself.

But such an explanation did not satisfy himself. Was it due to his own vanity that he refused to accept the natural explanation? He shook his head. God knew that he had little to be vain about! He was not good-looking, not attractive to women, and so had never been cursed with the most offensive kind of masculine conceit. He knew that he was a good reporter, but he didn't think that his head was swelled. No, he refused this explanation, because it wasn't true.

He hadn't imagined that his knee was well; it *had* been well.

Once again he found himself faint, and so he pushed his way through the swinging doors that led into the place where the singing waiter conjured up the brave days of old. He ordered a glass of whisky, and the raw fluid, burning his throat, seemed to drive the cobwebs away from his brain. He was able to think. He was able to put things, events, in their proper order, to analyze them, to discover what they meant.

He had been a cripple for twenty-eight years. Not badly crippled, but — so a score of doctors had told his parents and himself — incurably. To-night, for a mo-

ment, he had been what those who believed in such matters termed "healed." Then he had fainted, to awake — a cripple.

Hallucination? *No!* He would not believe it. He, the cool-headed, cynical, incredulous Tom Barnett, *knew*. Well, then, facts call for no theories in explanation; they call for other facts. Why had he been cured?

He, in common with so many others, had noted the calm that attended the frequenters of the Hendricks Foundation. Outward calm betokens inward peace. He nodded his head. They couldn't all of them be in on Jane Maynard's clever game; all of them were not participants in some scheme of graft. Nor, had they been all schemers with her, could they have acted their parts so perfectly. Peace and calm. That was the atmosphere into which he had entered. In a moment of natural anxiety for the fate of a child, he had forgotten himself; all his cynicism, his hatred of the world, had been forgotten. And in that moment of self-forgetfulness the peace and calm of these others had stolen into his own mind, and — reformed his body!

He ordered another drink, and the waiter accepted the order as though it had been a compliment to his rendition of the popular song. Once again, thirstily, Barnett drank. And the liquor, which ordinarily would have befogged his mind, seemed to render it more keen.

It didn't matter that his knee was crippled now. It had been well, if only for a moment. The action of all those other minds upon his own, those other minds who saw him as perfect, had reacted upon his own, and, — had cured his knee. His cynical habits of thinking, ingrained by a lifetime's practice, had come back to him, had disorganized the cure that these others had effected, but, — the cure had existed.

He breathed deeply, frightened. It is not easy to

throw overboard the beliefs of a lifetime, even though those beliefs have been really nonbeliefs. To say that Tom Barnett had ever believed in anything or in anybody would be to state a falsehood. He had believed nothing. But now it seemed to him that he had stumbled upon a truth. No, he hadn't stumbled upon it; Jane Maynard had. But it didn't matter who had done so first; to have been among the finders —

It uprooted all his modes of thought; miracles were the physical manifestation of a highly keyed mind acting upon flesh and bone. His mind had not been highly keyed. He had gone to the Foundation in an amused frame of mind.

It didn't matter what had been his feelings. Facts were facts: his knee, that had been crippled, had been momentarily given a normality that it had never owned before.

Was he going crazy? He asked himself that question. But never had his mind seemed so acute, so keen, so able to analyze. He held out his hand; it no longer shook. Of course the liquor might have steadied him. Absurd! He knew what had steadied him: the comprehension of a tremendous truth.

What was Christianity in its bare essentials? The love of one's neighbor. And to love one's neighbor was to see him without his imperfection. The girl had seen the truth and was preaching it. What others preached was all wrong. For the modern preachment of Christianity laid too much stress on the fact that oneself had been created in God's image, and too little on the fact that one's neighbor had also thus been created.

He rose to his feet. Was he becoming a maudlin, psalm-singing sniveling — What had he, Tom Barnett, to do with bunk? And religion *was* bunk. What

else *could* it be? Hadn't he so considered it, *proved* it, since he was able to think at all?

But this *wasn't* religion. It was simply a common-sensible way of looking at people. Regard them decently and they'd so regard you. Why, it was —— He put down his glass with sudden decision. The old gods had gone. The new gods had arrived. He, Tom Barnett, who had hated the world, who had sneered at it, had jeered and jibed at it, would regard it differently.

"Must," the city editor had told him to write on his copy. And so, half an hour later, his lead all arranged in his mind, he marked his first page. It meant that no copy reader, no editor, no proofreader, would change his story. And he wrote the greatest story of his life.

He began with his entrance into the Foundation. He told, omitting no sneer that had been within his heart, his own feelings as he had watched the people gathered there under the leadership of Jane Maynard. And then he asked the rhetorical question, — why had he sneered? And from the fullness of his heart he answered the question. Because it is easier to deny than to believe.

The people, simple of faith, who crowded around her, — he pictured them for his readers. As dramatically as he could — and he possessed the dramatic sense in the highest degree — he told of his own experience. He admitted that his readers might laugh; he told them that he didn't care. For one glorious moment he had been no cripple; he had been sound and whole. He might never be sound and whole again, he admitted, but that would be his own fault.

He closed with an appeal to the public to support an institution that preached a real and practical Christianity. Then he handed his copy to a waiting boy and slipped a fresh sheet of paper in his typewriter. He addressed a brief note to the city editor:

Dear Boss: I'm quitting to-night. I've done the thing that no decent man does: I've thrown down the paper. And I never felt so decent in my life.

Yours,
Tom Barnett.

He folded the paper, put it in an envelope, and placed it in the city editor's letter box. Then, his coat over his arm, his hat jammed upon his forehead, and his stick in one hand, he looked about the office. This was the end, the finish.

He had thrown down his paper. What other office would be open to a man who had so basely violated the most important paragraph in the newspaper code of ethics? What editor would trust him? What lowly office cub would not scorn Tom Barnett, the man who threw down the *Blade*?

He had been assigned to ridicule Jane Maynard. Instead, he had glorified her as a prophet. For Tom Barnett there would be no sheet so mean as to offer him work.

And yet he did not feel ashamed. Beyond the loyalty to a paper was the loyalty to himself. He had never known what loyalty to self meant. He knew now. It meant no mean thing dictated by interest; it meant loyalty to an ideal. He, who had never cared about ideals, possessed them now.

The *Blade* was the thing of Michael Anstell, a weapon which he would use, had used, against recalcitrant political henchmen, against financial rivals. Now Anstell would use it against a lovely girl, whose only offense was that she had intrigued the fancy of Michael Anstell's son.

Had Tom Barnett been the man that he should have been, he'd have refused the assignment, have quit his job rather than play Michael Anstell's dirty game. But he

hadn't. He'd accepted, to his own shame. Worse; he'd gloried in the assignment. Now — he had turned Anstell's own weapon against the billionaire himself. Something of that old sardonic twist showed at the corner of his mouth as he thought of this. Michael Anstell would find it difficult to bend the *Blade* to his wishes after tomorrow morning. Having printed two columns of praise and glorification, the *Blade* could hardly turn against itself.

His copy was marked "must." That was the cream of the jest. Instructions would have been left by the day editors which would compel the night desk to put through his story. He had done a thing which, according to all his newspaper standards, was damnable, but which, according to the standards of justice and truth, was most commendable.

But our newer morality, when it conflicts with our older, wages its battle in our hearts. And Tom Barnett's heart felt the weapons as the new and the old fought together. He felt sick, ashamed, even as he felt well, uplifted. In an all-night drug store on Park Row he waited until the first edition of the *Blade*, cried aloud by vociferous newsboys, reached the street. He bought a copy and saw the long headline that had been put across his story. He saw his own name signed to the story. He saw a photograph of himself, dug up to grace the occasion from the office files. It was an honor rarely accorded him; to sign his own stuff and have his own photograph also printed. For a moment he felt that exultation which comes to reporters when such signal honor is accorded them and their work.

Reaction came. The "night desk" had seen that he'd written a corking story; also one that, from its personal side, was a most amazing yarn. They had displayed it advantageously; they wanted to sell the wares the *Blade*

offered. If he had lingered in the office after turning in his copy, he would have been questioned. He was glad that he hadn't had to face interrogations, even though he could have answered them truthfully, even though not one word of his story could be impeached.

But he had betrayed not merely his employer, but his associates. True, in betrayal he did honor to the new faith that was in him, but — what right while he took the *Blade's* money, while he was the servant of Michael Anstell, had Tom Barnett to deceive his employer, to betray him?

His head sunk on his chest, he limped up Park Row, beneath the shadow of the elevated. He passed through Chinatown and came out upon Chatham Square. And as he walked he thought.

Why, not merely had he betrayed his craft, but — they'd think that he lied. The story had been run because it had "must" on it, but — he limped. He still limped. Who would believe that he had been healed, even for a moment? Why, the people who'd seen him faint, who'd carried him upstairs in the Foundation, didn't know why he'd fainted, didn't know that for the moment he had been cured. Only his own word! His city editor would think that he lied, had done the thing deliberately, that he had vented a hidden hatred at a time when his fellows were helpless against his venom.

Some men drink to drown their sorrows for their sins. Tom Barnett went to the place where the singing waiter still had his existence and drank to drown his sorrow for his virtue.

CHAPTER XV

ON old Murray Hill, on a side street around the corner from Park Avenue, lived Michael Anstell. In its day the mansion had been pictured in the press of the world. Columns had been devoted to the origin and cost of the bronze gates that guarded the front door. They had come from an ancient palace of the old nobility of France. A Venetian doge had dwelt in the city of canals, centuries ago, and in his retinue had maintained a craftsman whose cunning had immortalized his master. The marble fittings of the hall had been created by this long-dead Venetian. Egypt, India, the Europe of the Renaissance, the Greece of two thousand years ago — the culture of ancient, medieval, and modern times — had existed for one purpose, to glorify Michael Anstell.

At any rate, the products of that culture, the best of them, were owned by him. Of what use to say that the artist, the sculptor, had worked because God had endowed him with a spark from His own divinity? Results count; Michael Anstell owned their works. Their bones were dust; but Michael Anstell lived and owned the things that they had created. They had labored for him.

So, at any rate, it pleased the billionaire's fancy to think. The best that princes, kings, emperors had managed to acquire; from these, guided by highly salaried cultural experts, Michael Anstell had chosen the furnishings for his home.

When the tide of fashion swept farther uptown, Anstell refused to move with it. Lest commerce encroach too closely upon his residence, he bought up the neighbor-

hood for several blocks around him, forming an oasis of residential calm in the midst of teeming trade.

Twenty servants ministered to his comfort in this city home. On his country estate in Westchester over five hundred persons, including those who labored upon the grounds, were employed. He used his Westchester place a couple of months during the year, but he kept it staffed all the year round.

There was also a forty-room cottage at Bar Harbor, a fishing camp on a stream that emptied into the St. Lawrence, a villa in Florida, and magnificent apartments, maintained in readiness for their owner, in London and Paris. For the direct smoothing of the path of living for Michael Anstell not less than two thousand persons were employed. His business ventures employed millions.

And indirectly the whole world paid tribute to him, was in his employ. Yet, master of a fortune such as the world had never seen, one that would have made such a one as Cræsus lament his comparative beggary, Michael Anstell was as dependent, for the execution of his plans, upon others as the least of us.

The railroad king may discharge the engineer. But if the engineer, guiding his important freight across the country, nod at his lever, and the train is wrecked, of what avail are his passengers' millions?

If the pilot forgets the hidden rock, of what use, in the moment of dread, is one's ability to engage or discharge a thousand pilots? If one's chef has a murderous impulse, is it not too late to discharge the man when the poison has been consumed?

So, when Michael Anstell read, at the breakfast table, his copy of the *Morning Blade*, his impulse of fury passed almost immediately. He would be revenged — yes. The man who had violated his commands would pay the last

penalty that Michael Anstell could exact. He would be a pariah among newspaper men, unable to secure employment anywhere. "Thomas Barnett." The name would be forever engraved on the mind of Anstell.

But to waste good physical tissue upon a person of no importance was to violate the Anstell creed, which was that broken eggs cannot be replaced. Fretting and fuming over matters that cannot be helped affects one physically. Anstell had learned that years ago. Life was too precious, its moments too few, for one of them to be dissipated in nonessential matters.

Not that his son's fancy for Jane Maynard was non-essential. It was of vital importance. But because one method of curing that fancy had not worked, to bother about it was ridiculous.

He wondered, as he read the story, how much of it was true. That is, how sincere this Tom Barnett was. That there was any truth at all in the man's statements was too absurd to be admitted for a moment. But what portion of the story did its author himself believe? And, inasmuch as he doubtless had been instructed just what sort of story to write, how had he dared violate those instructions?

As to the philosophical matters touched upon by Barnett, Anstell paid them the tribute of a frown. This reporter was a dangerous anarchist. He stated, flatly, that organized religion had failed, in part at any rate, of its ostensible purpose. How dared he, a miserable scribbler, attack institutions that were supported by the "best people" in all civilized lands? He himself, Michael Anstell, was a heavy contributor to organized charity. The reporter had attacked Michael Anstell himself.

But he must remember his code; a gnat may annoy the elephant, but only slightly. He shrugged, even as the

elephant might flick his great ear, whisking the gnat away. He turned to other pages of the paper.

But later in the day Simmonson was summoned to his office. In fear and trembling the publisher obeyed. Simmonson had read the Barnett story; he had conferred with an outraged managing editor, an amazed city editor. Barnett was insane, that was the only solution of the matter.

It was the city editor, trying to protect the reporter for whom, despite Barnett's cynicism, he had a genuine fondness, who advanced this theory.

"It doesn't matter a tuppenny damn what Barnett is, or isn't," cried Simmonson. "The night desk must have been insane, too, to pass such driveling rot."

The managing editor shrugged. "They knew it was a 'must' from old M. A. himself," he retorted. "And old M. A.'s ways are dark and devious, you know."

Simmonson did know. He couldn't blame the night desk; he couldn't blame any one but the reporter. *He* couldn't. But whom would old M. A. hold responsible?

"Fine disciple you have on the *Blade*, Simmonson," said Anstell, as the publisher was admitted to his presence. His hard blue eyes glinted dangerously.

"The man Barnett deliberately ——" began Simmonson.

"You are responsible for the men employed on the *Blade*," Anstell cut him short.

Simmonson shrugged hopelessly.

"Barnett — has he offered any explanation?" asked Anstell.

Simmonson shrugged again. He handed to Anstell Barnett's note of resignation. The billionaire's face was expressionless. He passed the note back to Simmonson.

"See that he gets no employment — anywhere," he said.

Simmonson nodded eagerly.

"That'll be all," said Anstell. Simmonson left in huge relief. His profitable job was not to be taken away from him.

But that was not Anstell's way. He had won for himself unflinching loyalty from thousands of men. He had not won it by injustice. In his own way, Michael Anstell played his game fairly. He made errors of judgment himself; he could expect no more from other men. He had sent for Simmonson merely because it was not well to let a man who had made a mistake, directly or indirectly, think that his employer had not noticed it. To send for a man, let him suffer these agonies that come to men, along in life, when their sustenance may rudely be robbed from them, and then to pardon them, — that was Michael Anstell's cruel way. It was a good way; it got results. Simmonson would work like a dog for months to come, trying to cover up this dreadful thing that Tom Barnett had done.

If only one could purchase absolute loyalty, loyalty that held no exceptions, — Anstell shrugged. He was no miracle worker, like — and his thin, wide lips relaxed in his rare grin — Jane Maynard. He wasn't. He could get it from most, but not from all. However, Tom Barnett, jobless, blacklisted, would be a living example to all other newspaper men that loyalty was the only safe policy.

And, of course, the man who had bent the industries and finances of a nation to his will would think of other methods of subduing the flames of young passion. Had ridicule been his only weapon, he would have given way to fury, costly to one's mental and physical well-being though fury might have been. But he had a score, a thousand strings to his bow. One young woman, — his grin became a harsh chuckle.

His secretary entered, quietly, deferentially.

"Judge Galway," he said.

Anstell's thin lips pursed. He hesitated a moment. "Send him in," he ordered.

The secretary departed, a moment later to return, holding the door wide for the entrance of Judge Galway. Anstell rose as the eminent lawyer entered. It was his fancy to treat men like Galway as though he considered them his equals. As a matter of fact, he despised the lawyer, whose title was one of courtesy, due to his service upon the Federal bench thirty years ago. Anstell despised him because, with all the cunning in the world, he played monkey paw to Anstell's cat. Without that aggressive greed, hoggishness, that had placed Anstell in his supreme position, it was nevertheless Galway who always showed Anstell where the chestnuts were, showed him how they might be obtained, and then, at his master's order, did the fetching himself. Anstell paid him well, a fabulous salary, indeed. But the major portion of the chestnuts came to Anstell — always.

"Good morning, Judge," he said.

Galway nodded solemnly, judicially. He was a cautious man. Behind every cloud lay the sun; when the sun shone the clouds were close at hand; it was as well to be dubious, reserved, about all things. To commit one's self to any opinion might be dangerous.

He sat down and cleared his throat. A jackal, he waited for the lion to roar before his own unmelodious wailings should be emitted.

"How're things?" demanded Anstell.

The judge shook his head. "Ve-ry, ve-ry bad, Michael," he said.

He was one of the few permitted to address the billionaire by his given name, and he took every possible opportunity to show off his privilege. It did him good to

“Michael ” the billionaire even when they two were alone. Perhaps it, in a measure, restored to him a certain self-respect that had departed many years before.

For despite the fact that bar associations honored him, that on all occasions of public importance the eminent Judge Galway was invited to speak, that the press and public and that small portion of the public known as society always did him honor, Judge Galway, in his heart of hearts, knew that he had little of which to be proud. Public honor could not atone for that private knowledge. He might have been a great jurist; he might have been a great statesman; he might even have gone to the White House. Once, indeed, a great party had debated nominating him for the highest political place in the world. But rumors that had always been veiled, suddenly threw off their disguise and came out into the open, and Judge Galway's name was withdrawn by its sponsors before ever a ballot had been cast in the party convention.

He had chosen not to serve the people, but to serve one of the people. But he had amassed a comfortable fortune, and rarely did the ghost of dead ambition, of lost hopes, wail, bansheelike, about his mansion. But when it did, the judge shivered.

“Why bad?” demanded Anstell.

The judge passed a hand, mottled with age, across his mouth, a mouth whose meanness not even his gray mustache could disguise.

“The Helborn Bill won't be reported out of committee; it'll die there,” he said.

Anstell frowned. The Helborn Bill, one that affected certain valuable water powers, was vital to certain of his manufacturing plans. But a newspaper in an up-State town had attacked the measure. It had managed to extract a bit of humor out of the unfortunate name of the proposer of the measure; worse, it had attracted a great

deal of unpleasant attention. It was being smothered in committee.

"It *was* a little raw," he admitted, half angrily, half amused at thought of how close he had come to success in a gigantic public steal.

"Raw?" The judge was indignant. "It wasn't even heated, Michael."

"Things — other things — don't look too good," commented the billionaire.

Judge Galway spread his hands in a pious gesture. "The people have lost all reverence, Michael."

Anstell stared at him; his protuberant Adam's apple moved visibly up and down in his lean throat; his thin cheeks took on a flush of anger; his keen nose seemed to grow sharper, while his blue eyes blazed.

"By the lord, Galway, you struck an immortal truth. Reverence! That's exactly it. The one word that sums it all up: this damned anarchy that's sweeping the world; this incitement of the mob against the men who have made the world possible to live in; this desire for new things, — reverence. There's no more of it in the world, Judge."

The judge beamed upon his employer. It was not often that Michael Anstell praised the words of his employes. He did the talking; they listened.

"Reverence," repeated Anstell. "Why, in my day, people went to church; they respected good deeds, good institutions, good citizens. There — there was some sort of tradition in the hearts of the people. Not the same sense of tradition that existed in England, for example, but — a remembrance of what this nation stood for, what its founders had felt and believed — all gone now."

"This country," said the judge, "is nothing — to most of the mob — but a place to make a living in."

"By the lord, you expressed it again," said Anstell

approvingly. "A place to live in. That's all. No pride in its great institutions, in the men who've made this country what it is. My lord, Judge, we rich men of this country could afford to spend a pretty penny to awaken a proper sense of respect, of reverence for established things, in this country of ours."

The judge sighed. "Too late, Michael. They've gone hunting after strange gods ——"

"And they're bringing back strange demons," pronounced Anstell, grimly.

The two old men nodded their heads solemnly. Anstell broke the silence.

"Take that son of mine, for instance. Think he has any reverence for me, any respect for what I've done? None at all. He's in love with a crazy girl who's got religious mania — you've read of her, Jane Maynard."

The judge nodded. "Remarkable story about her in the *Blade* to-day," he said.

Anstell hit the table with his bony old hand. "Proves the point — exactly. Here I give orders to have her made a joke — you know, ridicule her out of town, open John's eyes that way. And what happens? The reporter, given definite orders, turns out that mess of hash you read this morning. I've had him discharged — small satisfaction in that, seeing that he'd already resigned. And I'll have him blacklisted, but — what a generation! A thing like that would have been unthinkable in our day."

"Right," agreed the judge. "So John's fallen in love?"

"He doesn't know it — but I do," said Anstell.

"But you can stop it," suggested the judge.

Anstell shrugged. "I'm fond of John, you know, Galway. The usual thing — won't do. Oh, I'll find a score of ways to head off anything serious, but ——"

Galway's mustache lifted in a grin. It exposed stained old teeth, long, like the fangs, almost of an animal.

"See the girl. That's the usual way, Michael."

Anstell shrugged; he cleared his throat, one of his customary ways of indicating that a subject was dismissed.

"About Carthew," he said. "What sort of a governor would he make?"

Again Galway's hands spread in that deprecatingly pious gesture. "Who can tell what man will keep his promises nowadays?" he demanded. "They become ambitious and forget that it is men like you and men like you alone who can gratify ambition, Michael. Also, they become afraid. But — I've sounded him."

"H'm," said Anstell. He pressed the bell that would summon his secretary, and Judge Galway took the hint. Alone, the billionaire walked to the window and looked down upon the city. But to-day he did not receive yesterday's thrill of ownership. The Helborn Bill — Galway's uncertainty regarding Carthew — things that radicals were doing in Congress — certain noncomplaisant judges —

Reverence. There was none of it in the world. His thoughts reverted to John, to Jane Maynard. See the girl, Galway had suggested. Well, why not? There might be something in it.

CHAPTER XVI

JOHN ANSTELL was not the shrewdest man in the world; his father was popularly supposed to be. Which is why, perhaps, John was popular and his father was hated. For we do not like shrewd people. We may possibly admire them and probably envy them, but we do not like them. In a world where the shrewd prosper and the guileless starve, logically our regard should be given to the shrewd. But it is a most illogical world. We reason very little; we feel a great deal. And from the day when the first blundering giant was tricked by an undersized dwarf, the world has held contempt for the man whose brain is too cunning. It is a contempt inspired by fear. The shrewd man may injure us in a way which we cannot combat, cannot even resent.

Neither was John Anstell the most guileless youth of his age that might have been found on the island of Manhattan. One cannot possess a practically unlimited allowance during the age of adolescence without learning to be "wise," even though one may not acquire wisdom.

In his apartment on Bryant Square — far enough removed from his father's Murray Hill mansion to feel free, yet near enough to make easy of accomplishment those filial duties which the young man occasionally felt impelled to perform — young Anstell read Tom Barnett's story in the *Morning Blade*.

He read it twice, and when he put the newspaper down at last, he sat staring at vacancy while the coffee cooled.

He knew his father. Michael Anstell had shown, as definitely as he ever showed anything to his son, that

there would be trouble if young John disobeyed his orders concerning Jane Maynard.

Orders! The old man, for the first time in his life, had used that word to his son. Orders! John felt his back straightening now, at remembrance of the harsh word. He'd asked obedience. Yes, there'd be trouble if John engaged himself to marry Jane Maynard. John had fully recognized that fact as he had left old Michael's office. And, recognizing it, he had grinned. It had not been an entirely mirthful grin; it was a thing of the lips that did not communicate itself to the eyes. A canny observer, noting, would have seen the resemblance to the father in the young man, a resemblance that ordinarily was not observable at all.

For, of course, it didn't matter, in the last analysis, what orders Michael Anstell gave to his son. He would render unto *Cæsar* the things which were *Cæsar's*, but, — no more. In matters of business, he would give to his father an unflinching loyalty; in matters of sentiment, — that was something else.

That the stern old man with the beaked nose and the glinting eyes could be capable of disinheriting his son, despite his statement that he played fair, was something that John understood. And, understanding, the grin lingered on his lips. He held no exalted opinion of himself, but, after all, he felt that he was as good as many a youth whom he knew earned more than a decent living for himself. The son of Michael Anstell could take care of himself.

Then his grin reached up across his cheeks to the corners of his eyes, entered his eyes, and the grin lost all its hardness. He was counting chickens before they were hatched. The way he argued with himself one would think that there was nothing to be done but notify Jane

Maynard of their impending marriage. Yet, she'd have *something* to say about it.

And, when you came right down to it, wasn't he rather taking his own feelings for granted? Had he ever seriously asked himself if he were in love with Jane Maynard? *Was* he?

It was in order to ponder this question that he had stayed away from the Foundation the previous night, had devoted himself to meditation. For he saw himself with a clarity that is given to few to possess, and those few are seldom young. He knew that life had been very attractive thus far, and that its attractions grew each day. He'd seen enough of money to possess a healthy respect for its good qualities and a healthy disdain for its bad. For he knew that money, though an inanimate thing, is able to exaggerate the qualities, whether for good or evil, of its owners, and therefore is in effect almost animate.

Now never has there been an age when youth and money could find more joy in life than in this age of ours. To give up that perfect freedom for the sake of gentle gray eyes, a kissable mouth — He *did* want her; he wanted her more than he wanted his father's billion or the things that billion could purchase.

This was the answer to the question. He *was* in love with her. Of course there were other matters, — the girl's feelings, for instance. But he was pretty confident that there was no one else; and where there was no rival the way might be a trifle easier.

Then why — this because he was not too guileless — did the *Blade* print such an amazing article about Jane in this morning's issue? He knew his father pretty well, or thought that he did.

Old Michael Anstell was not a man to overlook an important detail. He owned the *Blade*. He would certainly see to it that his newspaper refrained from prais-

ing a person who annoyed him. He *knew* his father. His reasoning, if applied to some one other than old Michael, might seem far-fetched, but — he believed in it.

What was his father's little game? Then, aloud, he laughed and reached for his now-chilled coffee. He was ascribing to his father an almost supernatural power. He must not, merely because he happened to be in love, lose his sense of proportion, of the ridiculous.

He knew that love was supposed to make people sensitive; he'd not known, until now, that it made them suspicious.

Dressing for the street, he began to think of Barnett's story as a story, a piece of evidence, not solely with relation to his father and to himself. Had the man told the truth? Could his knee have been healed, even for a moment?

He laughed again. Bless Jane's heart. She was the sweetest girl that had ever breathed, and he didn't care a hoot whether she worked miracles or not. She'd worked a miracle on him, John Anstell, a miracle of love, and that was enough. As for Barnett —

"This moonshine hooch," he chuckled, and so for the moment dismissed the *Blade*, its article, and the article's author, from his mind. But the dismissed subject came back to his mind at noon. For, when he called at the Foundation, hoping to induce its pretty mistress to have luncheon with him, he learned from the colored maid that Jane was out. And she had gone to see no less a person than Michael Anstell.

Every suspicion that had possessed him at breakfast multiplied itself a score of times. Jane was with his father. Why? And again why the article in the *Blade*? Was it possible that — A vicious suspicion flashed through his brain; he dismissed it immediately, but it would not take his commands; it came back again.

For he knew his father. He read the newspapers; he read, sometimes, between the lines; he read the implications in editorials that dared not be frank. He realized that Michael Anstell was not the most scrupulous man in the world.

This unscrupulousness had never, heretofore, worried John. Nor is it well or wise to condemn him too hastily because he had been complacent.

The world conforms. Not to conform is to render oneself unpleasantly conspicuous, marked for disgrace and worse, sometimes. It is a world filled with jealousy. Tutors, subservient professors, had answered John's youthful questions with clever sophistry. For he had asked questions when he had read between the lines. And he had been told that these implications, or — less frequently — direct charges against his father's honesty, were inspired by mean envy. As a great object lesson, one of his tutors had once taken him to a meeting of radicals upon the East Side. John had seen the audience, had listened to the speakers. He had noted the poor dress, the uncouth speech.

He was no more of a snob than the rest of us, and no less. For we are all snobs, differing only in the degree of our snobbery. Consciously or unconsciously, we pride ourselves that we are, in one respect or another, a bit better than our unfortunate neighbors. And what is snobbery but pride in an accident? For surely it is only accident that one of us even seems better than another.

And John Anstell had been brought up in that sacrosanct atmosphere of the modern American billionaire which would be laughable were it not pathetic — or tragic. Children whose fathers were laborers pride themselves on being "democratic." They are taught in school that they must be democratic; taught by teachers whose imported accents give the lie to the doctrine they profess.

A virtue is made of what should be a necessity, for democracy is necessary, as necessary as air, if there is to be progress.

In that atmosphere John had imbibed notions of class distinction that, analyzed, are matters of financial distinction only. But he had never analyzed them. And so he had readily swallowed the theory that only those are opposed to the wealthy who are envious of them. That there might be honest persons whose economic theories were at variance to those accepted by a conforming world, and that these honest persons might be able to adduce strong argument in support of their beliefs, — John knew nothing of all this.

But he was not a fool. His father's pretensions of a rough virtue had frequently annoyed him, even when he was a child, without his knowing exactly what it was that irritated him. And now that Jane Maynard had been summoned to a conference with his father —

He became nervous, worried. Of course his father couldn't, *wouldn't* do anything to her. What was there to do? But would Michael Anstell play as fairly as John would require? And might not Michael, by some crude effort of bribery, so offend the girl that any wearer of the name of Anstell would become offensive to her?

Had Michael Anstell deliberately ordered a reporter to lie about the Foundation in order, somehow, later to discredit the girl? It was the sort of suspicion that John, only yesterday, would have despised himself for holding. But to-day it seemed that he knew his father as he had never known him before. A score of things, each unimportant, perhaps, if judged by itself, stuck out from the screen of memory. Lumped together they made a sizable total, a total which stood for an unsavory method of obtaining what old Michael wanted.

Good lord, he was an ass! His dear old father! What

an unfilial pup he was to let his mind become filled with evil thoughts concerning the man who, after all, in his own peculiar way was fond of him.

But calling names has never been a method of securing victory over others, or over one's self. John Anstell dismissed the method. He could postpone judgment upon his father; he could, with equal justice, postpone judgment upon himself. Meantime he might find out a few facts which would have effect upon the arrival at those judgments. So he telephoned the *Blade* office.

The Anstell name was magical. He learned that Tom Barnett was not at the office, that he wasn't expected, that he had resigned. Also he learned Barnett's address. He hailed a battered taxi that he found upon the Bowery and directed the man to drive him to East Nineteenth Street. There, a block from Gramercy Park, in a shabby, old-fashioned brownstone house that once had housed Manhattan's nobility, he found Tom Barnett.

A shabby maid had told John to knock on Barnett's door, and so his name had not been sent up. Answering to a call, "Come in," he had opened the door and crossed the threshold, to find himself in a comfortable old room, whose shabbiness corresponded to the house's exterior and yet seemed to have nothing of poverty about it. Perhaps the originals of some newspaper cartoons that hung upon the walls, or the almost new typewriter upon a desk by the window took away the air of forlornness that should have been there. Young Anstell could not tell.

From an inner room that he took to be a bathroom, by the sound of running water, the voice called again.

"Make yourself at home. Hooch on the table, cigars on the desk——"

"Thank you," he said.

From the inner room came sounds of splashing as he sat down in a chair by the window. He lighted a cigarette

and was half-way through it when the splashing ceased, and Barnett, in dressing gown of heavy velvet, entered the room.

The reporter stopped short and stared at Anstell. The visitor arose. "Mr. Barnett?" he asked.

Barnett's thin mouth drew down in his habitual sneer. "Ye-ah, I'm Barnett, all right. But who the — say, aren't you John Anstell?"

Anstell nodded. Barnett's sneer grew more noticeable. "Pa-pah send you around to bawl me out, eh?"

Young Anstell flushed. "I came around to see you, Mr. Barnett, because — why, because ——"

Barnett sat down by a table on which was an apparently untouched breakfast. He reached ostentatiously for a decanter that stood by the coffee-pot.

"Won't hurt your prejudices if I try a hair of the dog, eh?"

Anstell grinned. "It won't hurt mine a bit. How about your own?"

Barnett's hand paused midway to the bottle. "Elucidate," he snapped.

Anstell shrugged. "I've read the *Blade* this morning, Mr. Barnett. And — I had an idea that — maybe — there was some truth in your article."

"Well, who the hell says there isn't?" demanded Barnett harshly.

Anstell shrugged. "You spoke of a hair of the dog that bit you. I'd thought, from reading your articles, that maybe you had a few prejudices of your own. Liquor might have been one of them."

"A little more elucidation, please," said the newspaper man.

"Well," drawled Anstell, "people are liable to say two things about the author of that article: one, that he's a liar; two, that he was drunk. I thought that you

might have recognized that. If you had, you'd be careful about drinking, about admitting that you'd been drinking last night —— ”

“I did my drinking after that article was written. Run along home to pa-pah and tell him that,” snarled Barnett.

“That's twice,” said Anstell, “that you've mentioned my father. I take it that—that you don't care for him.”

“You take it perfectly,” said Barnett. “I think that your father —— ”

Anstell held up his hand. “There are just two reasons, Mr. Barnett, why you ought not to finish that sentence.”

“You run in ‘twos,’ don't you?” said Barnett. “What are they?”

“One,” smiled Anstell, “is that he's my father; the second is that I probably weigh forty pounds more than you.”

Barnett's hand came away from the decanter. “And because I'm a miserable cripple you can't slug me, eh?”

Anstell's eyes were gentle. “I can't stop you; that's it.”

“*Noblesse oblige* stuff, eh?” Barnett rose and walked to the desk, where he got a cigar. He offered the box to Anstell; John declined and took a cigarette from his own case. Barnett sat down again by his untasted breakfast. “Well,” he said, “what's the idea, Mr. Anstell?”

“You've resigned from the *Blade*, Mr. Barnett,” said Anstell.

“Is that a question or a statement of fact?” demanded the reporter.

“The office so informed me,” said Anstell.

“Well, that's a bit of truth that came from the *Blade*

office then. It'll be a habit soon. My article this morning, and their telling you that I was through —— ”

“Isn't the *Blade* an honest paper?” asked Anstell.

“Aw, don't,” pleaded Barnett. “You leave yourself too wide open, and that *noblesse oblige* stuff won't carry me much farther. An honest paper? Don't you realize that I'm ready to laugh as I reply, ‘Why, your father owns it.’ And that'd be plenty answer.”

“Would it?” asked Anstell. His tone was quite serious.

Barnett grinned. “I take it that daddy has fooled you a bit, too. Honest? I wrote an honest story for it to-day, but that wasn't your father's fault.”

Anstell leaned forward. “That's what I came to see you about, Mr. Barnett. Did my father order the story?”

Barnett chuckled. “Not that story. A story. Wanted the girl roasted to a frazzle — what's the use? You know why, don't you?”

Young Anstell sighed. “Yes, I know why, Mr. Barnett.”

He knew, too, why Michael Anstell had sent for Jane. Knew it? He'd known it all along, but — he'd hated to believe. After all, Michael Anstell was his father.

CHAPTER XVII

THERE is a magic about great wealth whose existence we might all admit without argument. All of us brag more readily about our brief conversation with Mr. Gold than we do about our real intimacy with Mr. Brain. We jeer at those whom we convict of sycophancy, yet our own guilt is but a matter of opportunity. When a delegation of national legislators visits New York, upon whose yacht do they sail up the Hudson? That of a youth with a record of no achievement but an inherited colossal fortune. When a distinguished foreigner visits the country, who is appointed to receive him? Some persons whose ancestors juggled real estate, or peddled furs, or ran a tavern, or a ferry.

And no fault can be found with this state of affairs. When subserviency first crept into the human heart, it was directed toward the individual whose physical strength made him a friend to be coveted, an enemy to be feared. When cunning superseded brute force, it was to cunning that men bowed the knee. That rule of cunning has endured for thousands of years. But during each generation increasing tribute has been paid to mentality, a thing as distinct from cunning as the cool blue ice is from the muddy slime below. By and by intellect will receive its full due; then, later, who knows but that the rule of heart may come, and character take its rightful place?

Jane Maynard had thrilled at meeting John Anstell. During these past few days she had had opportunity to study the youth; she now was able to think of him as a

personality, not an appanage of a billion. If she thrilled now at sight or thought of him, it was not because he would some day be the richest man in the world; it was because he was a personable young man with a merry disposition whose attentions to her were flattering. For she had none of that sort of vanity that made her accept masculine attentions as her just due. She was pleased when people liked her. Which, perhaps, is one of the reasons why almost every one did.

But when the telephone bell rang and a smooth voice informed her that Michael Anstell would like to see her at his office at the earliest opportunity, she was thrilled again. Before she had had time to think, she had accepted the invitation and named thirty minutes later as the time of her arrival.

After hanging up she regretted her impulse. She berated herself because, without asking a why or a wherefore, she had eagerly agreed to call. After all, she was not, she thought, a snob. She'd mingled with persons of power and place and fortune all her life. But her anger faded into self-amusement. She was human, and a sight of Michael Anstell in the flesh was something that no human could possibly forego. Had not kings broken engagements with potentates that Michael Anstell be not inconvenienced? Who was she, Jane Maynard, to debate with herself about the advisability of answering immediately any summons of the great Michael?

But, naturally, she asked herself, "Why?"

The question set her heart to trembling. Michael Anstell was the father of John Anstell. In that young man's eyes she had thought, of late, to find certain things that were not displeasing. Not displeasing to her, but — to the young man's father, to the great Michael Anstell? Michael Anstell must have great designs for his only son.

She felt herself flushing. Wasn't Jane Maynard as important as any girl?

She was adjusting her hat before the mirror in her tiny bedroom on the Foundation's second floor as she put this question to herself. She saw the color as well as felt it upon her cheeks, her throat.

"You, woman," she said aloud, her voice severe, "it's about time you took stock of yourself. Blushing because a man — *worrying* — yes, you are, Jane Maynard — worrying because somebody's father may not think you —"

She pressed her hands against her eyes, shutting out the delectable view of herself that the mirror offered. Was she in love with John Anstell?

Only an hour or so after John Anstell had asked himself if he were in love with Jane Maynard, that young woman asked herself a similar question regarding John Anstell. But whereas John Anstell had found the answer ready in his heart, Jane Maynard drew upon woman's inexhaustible fund of uncertainty. She didn't know, and she didn't want to know — yet. For woman engages the god of love with delicacies of combat unknown to the ruder tactics of man.

Man it is who has always wished to reduce the mysteries to geometrical proportions, to mathematical formulæ. Woman has accepted the mysteries for what they are, unknowable things dependent upon our faith. Woman is religious; man supports creeds.

Man worships form; woman gives her devotion to spirit. And so, when man finds that the presence of a woman, or the thought of her, arouses in him certain emotions, he wishes to reduce this greatest of the mysteries, the thing that we call Love, to formula. Does he really love her? But woman prefers to delay, to dally with the sweet thought, to let her fancy play with it; there is no hurry.

An indefinite world is as delightful as a definite, all planned-out one. This is woman's theory, a heresy to man.

And so Jane put the question from her. But the other question — why did Michael Anstell send for her — she could not dismiss, did not wish to dismiss.

She had read Barnett's article in the *Blade*, read it with a certain fear in her heart. Suppose that the man had imagined none of his story, that it was all true? In what strange spiritual alchemy was she dabbling? Had she any right to arouse in people hopes that might never be verified? For, until now, she had never thought that the simple declaration of faith which she preached might have physical results. A sudden dizziness attacked her as she patted her hat for the final time. Suppose that she had unleashed some tremendous power — Then she laughed. A devotion to the Bland Hendricks idea had not robbed her of her sense of humor. She mustn't think of herself as a new Jeanne d'Arc, some new Crusader against the evils of the world. That was the trouble with nearly all good people: they took themselves with utter and fearful seriousness. She, — why, she was trying to believe in simple decency, trying to persuade others. . . . She wasn't trying to persuade others to do anything at all. She was — paying a debt to a dead man, Bland Hendricks.

But Michael Anstell owned the *Blade*. John Anstell had dropped that information in the course of casual conversation the other day. She had, in common with the rest of the uninitiated, vague ideas as to the ownership of newspapers. She wondered, dimly, how such a man, with all his interests, found time to read the paper every night before the news was printed. She believed, with a hundred million other people, that the owner of a paper practically writes it. Of course all of the hun-

dred million, if they stopped to think a moment, would realize the absurdity of this. But we never stop to think about other people's business. Even our own business, which we delegate to legislators and to judges, — our ideas as to this are laughable. It is only when some one happens to mention that a president couldn't possibly read all the bills that he signs that we realize the truth of the statement. But to-morrow we have forgotten it.

Michael Anstell's newspaper had printed a laudatory article about her. Michael Anstell, then, had printed it. So Jane reasoned. And she was still wondering why, bewildered, puzzled, when a deferential secretary, at the appointed time, ushered her into the audience chamber of the most powerful man in the world.

He was seated behind his desk, whose bulk dwarfed him for a moment. But for no longer than that. For the instant that his eyes met hers, Jane was no longer conscious of his lean, almost emaciated face, his physical smallness. She was only aware that a gigantic personality inhabited the room, before whose presence she seemed to become dwarfed.

He rose from behind the desk, and she was vaguely aware that though his throat was the throat of an old man, he moved with the vigor of a man in the prime of life.

"Miss Maynard, you are indeed courteous to an old man," he greeted her.

He advanced toward her and took her hand in his. She looked down at the fingers that inclosed her own. They were leathery-skinned, with protuberant, bony knuckles. Yet they had nothing of that withered look that goes with age. Indeed, nothing of Michael Anstell suggested age except the throat and the flesh just above it and below the chin, indices that cannot be disguised and that do not lie. For he *was* old.

Though he had a young son, a late marriage accounted for that. Michael Anstell was somewhere on the shady side of seventy. How far no one knew, for even "Who's Who" had guessed at the date of his birth. Michael Anstell had always preserved a certain reticence about his early life. It was a part of that secrecy about important and unimportant details that had later grown to be a part of the man's very soul.

She smiled at him. "When Michael Anstell summons, the world attends," she told him.

He laughed. He could achieve the impression of mirth.

"You're a flatterer, Miss Maynard," he told her.

She sat down in the chair which he indicated.

"It is you who flatter — by sending for me," she retorted.

He was seated now behind his great desk. "How do you know it's flattery? I might want something from you, Miss Maynard."

Her dimples would have dazzled a younger man.

"Isn't that flattery? That Michael Anstell should covet anything that any other mortal possesses?"

He stared at her; his hard gray eyes were neither condemning nor approving. They were appraising.

"A mind as well as beauty," he said. "You are a dangerous young woman, Miss Maynard. Beauty is bad enough, but when wit is coupled with it —"

"And you deny that you are a flatterer?" she laughed.

He leaned suddenly back in his chair. It seemed to her that he had suddenly made some sort of decision. And he had.

For he had thought of Jane Maynard as some short-haired fanatic, a woman who carried a loosely rolled umbrella, wore unbecoming hats and skirts that hung unevenly. Instead he beheld a most modishly attired young woman. Her skirts were short enough to assure him that

she wore heavy silken stockings, that her pumps were unserviceable enough to suit the most exacting of fashion's devotees; her tailored suit was something on which thought and time, as well as money, had been expended. The jaunty little blue and gold toque that she wore set rakishly upon her dark brown hair. She was not at all the sort of girl whom he had expected to meet, not at all the sort of woman who might be expected to head such an organization as the Foundation.

Still, he might have known as much. His son John was not the sort to be captured by a female parson. This was a wily person, a woman of craft and charm as well. He had sent for her without any definite plan. Michael Anstell rarely planned details. Only little men plan them. Michael Anstell saw largely and let the little matters be shaped as occasion arose, or let them, indeed, shape themselves.

He had sent for her, intending to find some way out of what he considered his son's entanglement with an adventuress. Galway had suggested sending for her, and the idea had met with his approval. In the back of his head had been lurking the thought of bribery. But now, eying the girl, he knew that if bribery succeeded it would have to be a very deft kind.

"Miss Maynard, I've been reading a lot about your remarkable work on the East Side," he said.

"You've been printing some of the reading matter," she said.

His face changed in expression no whit at all. Yet he began to rate her more highly than ever. If this remark of hers were a challenge, it was a very daring one. Could she possibly know what instructions had been given the Barnett person? But of course not. If it were a thrust, he decided to ignore it.

“And I’ve been talking with my son about you, Miss Maynard.”

More keenly than ever he watched her now. He saw her shoulders straighten ever so slightly beneath the cloth of her jacket, that very feminine jacket with the round collar and looped-up effect at one side. This might be an adventuress, but not the common sort. She would be prepared to do battle for a thing that she might want. And she was no religious fanatic. Insane? Yes. She must be. She’d been confined in some sort of a rest cure. But there were degrees of insanity. And — reluctantly he conceded this — she was pretty enough, bright enough to all seeming, for any man to forget the possible cloud upon some portion of her brain.

“Yes?” she said.

The monosyllable angered him. Taciturn people were always hard to deal with. A talkative man or woman was easy game, but the silent kind, who waited for the other person to make the verbal pace, — these were difficult.

“I wish,” he said, “that you’d tell me something of your plans.”

“Why?” she asked him.

“Why?” His surprise was genuine. That any one should question him, when the breath used for the question might be put to the better purpose of replying to his own question, was something new to Michael Anstell in these latter days of his greatness. But in dealing with a woman, especially a woman who has entangled one’s son in her charms, one stands upon no prejudices if one is wise. And Michael Anstell was wise.

“Why? I should think my own interest in charity would answer that, Miss Maynard. Anything that tends to the betterment of the poor ——”

"Why do you think that my work tends to the betterment of the poor?" she interrupted.

"Doesn't it?" he demanded. "You're located among them."

She shrugged. "Because they understand. At least, I hoped they would. Can you imagine my starting my Foundation on upper Fifth Avenue?"

He smiled his wintry smile. "But you feel that your work is for the rich as well."

She shrugged. "If my — work, as you call it, is for any one at all, why not for rich as well as poor?"

"Just what is your work, Miss Maynard?"

She looked at him, wide-eyed. "I don't know, Mr. Anstell."

"You don't know? You have no plan?"

"How could I? To — oh, I don't like to talk about it, Mr. Anstell. I — feel ridiculous. I — am afraid that I'll — sound priggish. To seem to be a preacher — I don't want that. I ——" She paused, uncertainly.

"But you are doing a great work. You intend to continue, don't you?"

"Why, of course," she answered instantly. She wondered why he had put such a question.

"Of course," he agreed. "To withdraw now — Miss Maynard, I've been analyzing your work." He made the statement unblushingly. "I think there's something in it."

She bowed, not trusting herself to reply. For now she knew that he had some other motive beside interest in her work; and that motive could only be her friendship for his son. Why or how she knew, she could not have told. Michael Anstell was no easy man to read; yet she had read him.

"Yes, there's something in it. It's a pacifying sort of thing; it calms people — Miss Maynard, suppose that

you were offered the opportunity to — er — spread your teachings in a big fashion — what then? ”

“ I don’t know. Tell me what you mean,” she asked him.

He eyed her again. Charming, witty, beautiful and — *no fool!* Yet — sincere enough in her attitude toward this work, if that was what you chose to call it, in which she was engaged. A crude bribe would not do. But one more subtle —

“ I’d like to finance this work of yours,” he told her. “ I’d like to see a branch in — say, Asia.”

He felt, immediately the words had left his lips, that he had failed of subtlety. Damn adventuring women, anyway, with their little prejudices and prides! He couldn’t offer her an outright bribe; she’d leave indig-nantly, tell his son, and —

She smiled at him, and beneath that smile he felt the color rising in his cheeks. It was many years since Michael Anstell had blushed, and the sensation was disagreeable. He felt like some small schoolboy detected in some mean violation of school etiquette.

“ Mr. Anstell, why not be frank? Asia? Why not send your son John there? That would be cheaper, too. You wouldn’t have to — pay him.”

Now this was what Michael Anstell liked. Getting down to brass tacks was something that he understood. He grinned, almost amiably, at his pretty visitor.

“ No sense in beating around the bush, Miss Maynard. Glad you recognize it, too. All right, then: how much to take your pretty fingers off John? ”

Over her cheek bones the red showed; her eyes glinted. But these were not signs of anger; they were the signs of the person who, coolly and warily, is prepared to fight.

"How much? Shall we say a — hundred millions, Mr. Anstell?"

"Just as you say, Miss Maynard. Thank you for coming. Good afternoon," was Anstell's reply.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Anstell," she said. She felt absurdly self-conscious, as though his eyes appraised every ounce of her, as she walked to the door.

CHAPTER XVIII

SINCE the day when the hare, conscious of his speed, sneered at the clumsy tortoise and thereby lost a race which has since become historical, power has sneered at weakness. Not merely prize fighters have entered the ring filled with an overconfidence that led to downfall, but princes, kings, emperors even, have grown forgetful of the human platforms on which they stood, until the platform has writhed and chaos has ensued.

Michael Anstell rarely made the error, however, which has overthrown champions, wrecked dynasties, and changed the courses of civilization. No one had ever threatened Michael Anstell but that he had weighed the threat carefully.

This was no cowardice. It was hard common sense. He knew that no matter how powerful any man was, his power was temporary at best, and unstable to boot. He knew that potentates had been hurled from their thrones by puny, half-witted men crazed by the consciousness of their wrongs. Whole social orders have been overturned by a mob but yesterday despised.

And because Michael Anstell had hard common sense, he did not do what another and lesser man might have done. For another man, defied by his son and scorned by a young girl on whom the son's affections were apparently fixed, might have resorted to the exercise of the brute force that he possessed.

Not so with Michael Anstell. Instead, he canceled, through his secretary, his appointments for the rest of the day, lunched frugally and alone in his office, and ap-

plied himself to the solution of what suddenly loomed up as the greatest problem confronting him.

He loved his son. Not, perhaps, as other men loved their sons, taking intense pleasure in their triumphs, suffering in their reverses. For John Anstell was more than a son to Michael: he was an heir. And when one thinks in terms of inheritance, one thinks in terms somewhat different from flesh and blood.

Not for Michael Anstell had been the sweet pleasures of watching the clouded brain emerge from fog; watching the baby feet take the first steps; noting, with amazement, the birth of character, of individuality and its development. These things were all very well for the common herd, but Michael Anstell walked with the princes of earth. If ever he felt that, in looking upon John as an heir, instead of a son, he had lost something, he put the feeling from him swiftly, refusing to admit, indeed, that it had ever been with him.

Dreams he had, of course. But they were not dreams wherein his declining years were solaced by his son's children. In good time, of course, John would marry, subject to his father's approval, some girl who could advance the Anstell fortunes, whose ancestry was such that she could be depended upon to furnish sons who would carry the Anstell banner forward.

But now, secluded in his office, his meager luncheon eaten, he stared through his lofty window at the city and harbor and bay. John, until recently looked upon as an heir, as a means whereby the Anstell place should be continued, suddenly became a human being. Human beings are not machines, to be placed here, to be set there, to be moved thus and stopped so.

And because he was suddenly compelled to regard his son as a flesh-and-blood person, he was not foolish enough to underestimate Jane Maynard.

A fine girl. So, nodding gravely, he decided. Well-built, with that rounded slimness that spoke of supple strength. Pretty, too. More than that, beautiful. As a human being she assayed highly. Michael Anstell had instantly and instinctively liked her.

But when one considered her as a possible mate for John Anstell, such matters as beauty and strength, while well enough, were not sufficient. Not that Michael Anstell held a trace of the snob in his rather complex make-up. He had been born of humble parentage, denied all those early advantages which, if they do not always make for material success, at least smooth social pathways. He had begun his working days at the age of eleven, in a small mid-Western town, whither his parents had drifted from New England. They had been unambitious people, of unambitious ancestry. His father had been English and his mother Irish. It was the latter who had insisted that he be christened "Michael."

The stolidity of the Britisher and the imagination of the Celt: these two things had produced him. Imagination had enabled him to envision great things; stolidity and stick-to-it-iveness had enabled him to achieve them.

Quiet, reticent — no would-be biographer had been able to get the date of his birth — even secretive, he had modeled his career upon no pattern, but had done each day the task before him and spent his hours of freedom in planning greater tasks.

He lacked entirely personal vanity. It gave him no particular pleasure to hear the whispers that always followed his public progress. His private life had been clean; he had been faithful to his wife; no sex scandal had ever fastened filthy tentacles upon his name.

Society, which would have welcomed him, knew nothing of him. Public life, as it is generally understood, had never made his acquaintance, although he numbered, as

recipients of his bounty, and therefore as his admiring friends, the exalted of the world.

Yet, with this, had his son fallen in love with a girl of the poorer class, Michael Anstell would not have objected to her on that account. She would have furnished him with grandchildren to carry on the Anstell name and power.

This last had become his obsession. He had amassed a huge fortune without, in the beginning, exactly knowing why. There had been nothing else for him to do. He lacked the creative faculty of the artist or the inventor, and he was driven by a huge, apparently limitless energy. Perhaps the fact that his ancestry had been unambitious accounted for his own great activity. This mentality had been lying fallow for generations; in him it had taken root, pushed upward, blossomed.

And Jane Maynard was insane. She would not do as the mother of the children of John Anstell. This, from the outset, had been his assumption.

Now, staring down upon the scurrying millions whom he, directly or indirectly, ruled, he summoned before him a mental picture of the girl. Not her physical charms: these meant little to him. They might gratify his son, and, as a matter of fact, it would be pleasanter to kiss a pretty daughter-in-law than an ugly one. But it was her mind that he fought to see, through the medium of her physical attributes, and through, also, the medium of his own brain.

He liked her directness. He liked the way she had challenged him. A hundred millions, she had said. And if he'd accepted, she'd have laughed at him, and made it a hundred billions. She wanted John. She was a young woman of pleasant and assured position, but, that position would crumple before a real assault made by Michael Anstell.

But she and John, spurred on by his own objections, might be married at any moment. Her eyes. He came back to these. Gray, cool, clear. He wondered if his assumption had not been too quick. They, most certainly, were not the eyes of an insane person.

Of course, there were degrees of insanity, but he brushed this thought aside. How could a girl with eyes as clear as hers, as *sane* as hers, be anything save mistress of her senses?

But, if she were that, how account for the insane doctrine which she was preaching? He knew, from his brief conversation with her, that she was using this doctrine of hers for no monetary purpose. She was not that sort. He *knew* it.

Then — what?

Slowly, dimly, a thought began to creep into his brain. People differed on political principles, yet they were not necessarily, the proponents of either side, insane. Such a thing as an honest difference of opinion frequently existed in this world. And on matters of religion there were as many interpretations of the Bible, for instance, as there were persons in the world. Yet all of the interpreters were not insane. Some of them, at least, must be as normal as the others.

Nor did she seem the kind ridden by a fixed idea.

It was, he decided, one of those cases where the evidence must be carefully weighed. Judge Galway had spoken of the irreverence of the present day. Suppose that a way were found whereby reverence could be restored to the world.

He had, he imagined, as hard and matter-of-fact a brain as existed in the world. Yet, suddenly, he felt his mind seized by a thought so tremendous that it was almost grotesque, a thought that dizzied him, that made him

seize the ledge of the window by which he stood, and grip it for support.

Reverence! What a magical word! What it had meant to the ancient rulers who imposed priestcraft where statecraft failed, and obtained their ends by a cynical playing upon the sacred emotions of a world! Reverence! He wondered.

To consider the evidence. He walked to his desk and sat down before it. A moment later he was talking over the telephone with Simmonson, his publisher. He did not need to inform Simmonson who was speaking; a secretary, alert to save his master wasteful speech, had done that.

"Yes, Mr. Anstell," said the publisher.

"Barnett — the man who wrote that article. His address," said Anstell.

Simmonson made him hold the line but a fraction of a minute. Another fraction of a minute and Michael Anstell was in the elevator, on his way downstairs. A quietly dressed attendant, notified by telephone, from the office of the lobby where he waited, that the king of finance was on his way down, had signaled an alert chauffeur across the street. The Anstell car was waiting as its owner reached the curb. Anstell told the chauffeur Barnett's address and entered the limousine. As he started away, the unobtrusive attendant who had summoned the car stepped into another machine. Anstell never went fifty feet without guards at hand.

The same shabby maid who had admitted his son a few hours earlier told the father that Barnett was in and indicated the location of his room. Slowly Anstell climbed the one flight of stairs. It was only at such moments, when called upon for physical exertions, that his age was at all noticeable. Too long had he drawn upon his physical powers for sustainment of his mental activi-

ties; they rebelled. But not seriously. He was hardly puffing as he knocked upon Barnett's door.

He entered in response to a knock and softly closed the door after him. He stood a moment, eying the young man who, from his seat before a typewriter, stared at him in open-mouthed amazement. Then, as he advanced into the room, Barnett rose. He greeted his visitor with a flourish of his right hand. He still wore the gorgeous, though worn, dressing gown of the earlier day, and the sleeve fell away, exposing an extremely sinewy arm. He bowed mockingly.

"Welcome, lord of the middle, the high and low justice," he said. "Or shall we call it injustice? Anyway, it doesn't matter a tinker's damn, does it? Let me shake your hand, sir. I owe you a debt so great that it can never be paid."

He wrung the billionaire's hand. Anstell, for one of the few times in his career, found himself slightly at a disadvantage.

"Sit down," went on Barnett blithely. "Will you have a shot of hooch? Please. I want to be able to brag of it. Or refuse; it's all the same. Father and son in the same day refused a drink of Tommy Barnett's booze. Oh, it'll make an anecdote, no matter what you do."

Anstell seated himself precisely upon the edge of a chair. He ignored these ebullitions. "I wish, Mr. Barnett," he said evenly, "to have an accurate account of your experiences last night at the Hendricks Foundation."

The young man stared at him. He turned and walked to a couch along one wall. Anstell noted that he limped slightly. From the couch he picked a newspaper; he turned and advanced and handed the paper to his guest. "Better read your own snappy little daily, sir," said the young man.

Anstell took the paper, rolled it up, and tapped his

bony knee with it. "Not the newspaper account — the real story," he said.

For a moment their eyes met. The young man's grew hard; his voice, when he spoke, was icy. "Has it ever occurred to you, sir, that your reporters write the truth?"

"Your account is substantially correct, then?" asked Anstell.

"Substantially? Absolutely," corrected Barnett.

"And how do you account for it?" demanded his visitor.

"How do you account for Lourdes, for Saint-Anne de Beaupré, for the hundreds of cures that are being effected in churches and shrines the world over?" countered Barnett.

"Press agentry," said Anstell laconically.

"You've read your Bible?"

"I know; times were different then," said Anstell.

"Perhaps people were nearer to the truth," said Barnett.

Anstell leaned forward. "Could they become nearer to it to-day, do you think, Mr. Barnett?"

Barnett met his keen, almost eager glance a moment; then he turned and sat down again behind his typewriter. He lighted a cigarette. "What's the big idea, Mr. Anstell?"

"What do you mean?" asked Anstell.

"Oh, quit kidding," snapped the newspaper man. "You didn't come here to exchange philosophical views with me. You came here to get something. What is it?"

"Perhaps I want the truth," said Anstell.

"Read the *Blade*," said Barnett rudely.

Michael Anstell was used to no such treatment as this. A world bowed before him. Yet, if his anger were

aroused, there was no sign of it in his voice or manner. "I have read it, Mr. Barnett. You disobeyed orders, didn't you?"

"Yes, and I left your employ."

"And you speak of owing me a debt," said Anstell.

Barnett patted the sheet of paper in his typewriter. "See that?" That's the fifth page in the play that is going to make my fortune. For years I've wanted to write for the theater. Never had nerve enough to quit my job. Couldn't pin myself down to outside work while I was reporting. Now—I'm out of a job, and—I'm working on my play. Wherefore, the gratitude to you. I'm busy," he stated.

Over Anstell's face spread that faint smile that was so rarely there. "I'm an old man, Mr. Barnett. Couldn't you find a little courtesy for me?"

Barnett stared at him. "My God, you're a whiner, then, after all. I had a feeling that you were like the rest of them, the billionaires, the rulers, and you are. When you can't bully, you plead, you whine. Go on; I like the sound of it."

"You're somewhat refreshing yourself," said Anstell. And now, strangely, even his eyes showed mirth.

"Why? Because I'm not afraid of you, eh?"

"Because I think that you're an absolutely truthful man. I thought—never mind what I thought when I read the *Blade*. But now—Mr. Barnett, was my son here to-day? You mentioned two of us refusing——"

"What if he was?" demanded Barnett.

"Why did he come?"

"Why not ask him?" countered the newspaper man. Anstell rose. "I will, Mr. Barnett. And I want to thank you."

"Thank me?" Barnett was slightly bewildered. "What for?"

“For the truth—as I just said. Now I know what to do.”

He rose and simultaneously Barnett likewise left his chair. He confronted the older man. “Look here, Mr. Anstell—lay off that girl. Let her alone. Understand?”

“I’m afraid I don’t,” said Anstell.

“I’ll be clearer, then. You keep your dirty hands, your dirty papers, your dirty shyster lawyers that can cook up a scandal at a minute’s notice, away from her. Now do you understand?”

Anstell shrugged. “I do, but why do you——”

“Oh, not on my account. On your son’s. If you have any use for him at all——”

“My son’s happiness, Mr. Barnett, is my one object in life,” said Anstell.

Barnett laughed. “I suppose, sir, that what I’ve said has converted you. Now you’re ready to let him marry her, eh?”

“If he wishes to,” said Anstell calmly.

Barnett could only stare at him open-mouthed.

As for Anstell, the big idea, the biggest idea, he believed, that had come to any man since the day of Mohammed, had come to him. Unshaped though it was, formless, amorphous, he knew that it would resolve itself into clarity later on. It was because of the idea that he answered as he did. For he believed that in his account in the *Blade* Tom Barnett had told the truth. And if that were so, the idea was feasible.

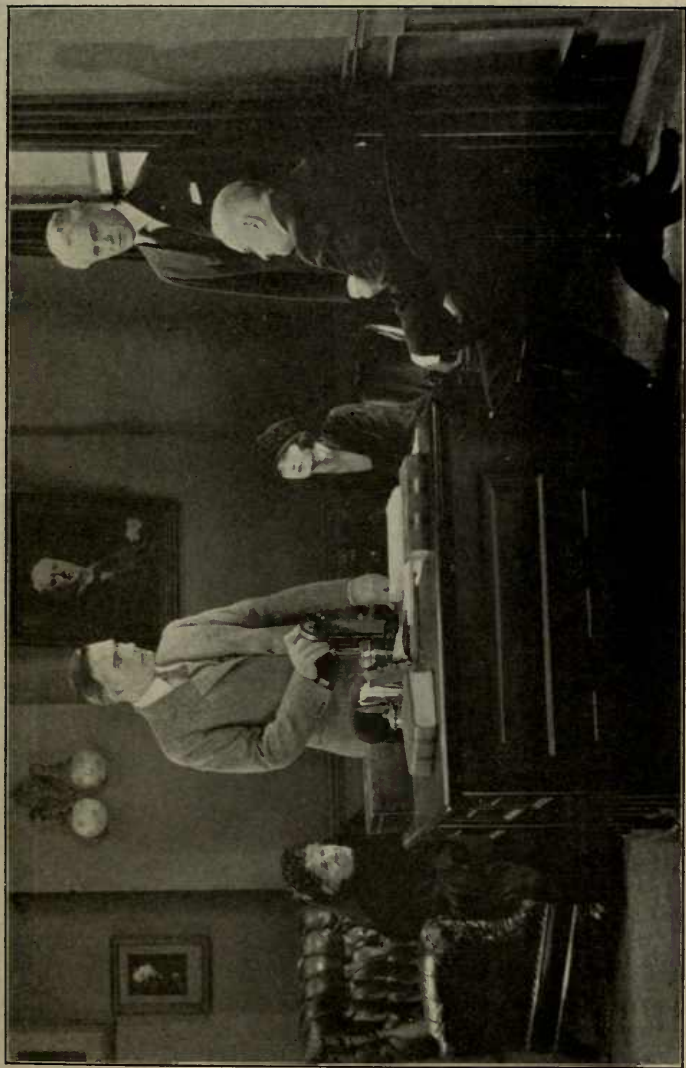
CHAPTER XIX

THE most uncommon gift in the world is the ability to recognize not merely the strength of the other fellow's argument, but its proportion of justice. Jane Maynard possessed this gift. And, as it is always accompanied by a sense of humor, she smiled as she descended in the elevator from the lofty offices of Michael Anstell. She was still smiling when she entered the Foundation: her lips still curled as she sat before the mirror of her dressing table in her bedroom upstairs.

For she knew that Michael Anstell must know who she was: he must realize that a Maynard's position was quite as high as that of an Anstell. Without snobbishness she nevertheless had an appreciation of the distinguished ancestry behind her and was proud of it. Of course, she was not wealthy, as wealth goes nowadays. But Michael Anstell doubtless would not hold that against her.

It was her position in the public eye to which Michael Anstell objected. That and her sojourn at the rest cure on the Hudson. He didn't want his son entangled with a girl of dubious mentality. That was his position. She knew it as clearly as though he had stated it in so many brutal words.

The fighting glint had entirely left her eyes; the color had vanished from over the cheek bones. Michael Anstell was an amusing old man, and she smiled at remembrance of him. She didn't blame him. But she didn't happen to be crazy. She was certain of that. She had no obsession which controlled her deeds. Unless it might be



"I intend to prosecute him to the full extent of the law."
Ruby Lafayette, Henry Hebert, Eleanor Boardman, Edward Martindel.
(*The Day of Faith*) (A Goldwyn Picture)

termed ~~obs~~ession to endeavor to give the Bland Hendricks idea a fair chance in the world. Fair play. That was her only obsession. She'd not surrender it for a thousand Michael Anstells and their sons.

And now, as she made this mental promise, the smile finally faded from her lips. Opposition may or may not strengthen love; it certainly assists in determining whether or not love exists.

A few hours ago Jane had been toying with the thought of love. Woman-like, the idea was a ball which she could toss from hand to hand, high in the air. Now it had become something different; a problem needful of immediate solution. Michael Anstell, in an attempt to postpone an issue or render it nugatory, had advanced and developed it.

As she studied the problem, the most vital that had come to her, the most vital that comes to any woman, she no longer laughed at remembrance of Michael Anstell. He had been bland enough, but behind that blandness lay a hint of menace.

Suddenly she rose from the chair before the dressing table, ceased her attentions to those coquetties of toilet that had engrossed her physical actions if not her thoughts, and paced the room.

What would Michael Anstell do? She had no fear for herself, but for John — All that she had ever heard or read of the efforts of stern parents in thwarting the affections of their sons and heirs came back to her mind. The power of Michael Anstell was limitless. It was all very well to laugh at fears, to remind oneself that police paced their daily beats, that it was a world where the law of the majority imposed itself upon the will of a minority, no matter what that minority's wealth might be.

But these reminders were not sufficient; she began to tremble, the smooth texture of her cheeks became pallid.

She sat down, fighting against a laugh that held a hint of hysteria in it, as the colored woman knocked upon the door and told her that John Anstell wished to see her. Her voice shook as she replied that she would be down in a minute.

But it was ten minutes before she entered the assembly room where John was nervously awaiting her. They had not been minutes spent in beautifying herself; for they had been minutes spent in battling for the control of suddenly rebellious nerves, in battling for an understanding of herself, her desire, her will.

And she had won the battle when she entered the room, where still, weighted by a careless book, were the five hundred dollars of her uncle's gift. She was calm, utterly mistress of herself, to all outward seeming. But in her eyes was something that John Anstell had not seen there before, something that he read, yet, reading, hardly dared to believe.

He had walked the streets aimlessly for an hour after leaving Tom Barnett's room. Then he had lunched, or attempted to do so, for the food lacked savor. And now, having allowed sufficient time, he had correctly judged, for Jane to visit his father and return to the Foundation, he had come to see her.

Neither of them, a moment later, could have told how it happened. For that matter, they never knew. But from eye to eye something flashed, kindled, consumed them, and they were in each other's arms. It was centuries, æons, before they separated, before locked arms and pressed lips reluctantly released. Then Jane, her voice tremulous, the hand that patted her disarranged hair trembling, said, "This is the second time, young man, that you've kissed me. Are you going to be impertinent, frivolous, a second time, too?"

John stared at her hungrily. He advanced toward her, but she held up a restraining hand.

"I'm a hard-working girl, sir," she said. "But I'm self-respecting, and no man can kiss me" — she blushed — "the way you've been doing unless he means honorably."

He grinned. "Trying to trap me into a proposal of marriage, eh?"

She nodded. "I surely am, John Anstell."

He frowned. "Marriage is a pretty serious business, Jane Maynard. I suppose you understand who'll be boss of our household."

"Certainly," she replied. "I will."

"It's well to get a serious matter like that settled, you know," he said. "What are your qualifications for boss-ship?"

"I'm bad-tempered and selfish," she told him.

"That qualifies you. We-e-ll, darn it, I can't think of any reason why I shouldn't propose to you, Jane Maynard. How'll I do it?"

"On your knees, of course," she told him. "I should think you'd have known that. All my suitors propose like that."

"Of course," he agreed. "And I always do it that way."

"Then don't — this time," she said. Her bosom lifted and fell. "Oh, John," she sighed.

She leaned toward him, her lips parted. "I *do* love you, John," she said.

"I kind of like you, Jane Maynard," he said.

He, too, leaned forward, and their lips were touching once again when they heard the outer door open. They stood a moment, then hastily separated as Michael Anstell entered the assembly room.

He paused a moment in the doorway. They could feel

his keen eyes taking in the situation. "H'm," he said. "Did I come too soon?"

It was Jane who recovered self-possession first. "That depends, Mr. Anstell, on what you mean."

"You know what I mean, young woman. Has my son proposed to you?"

Jane met his glance a moment. Then she turned to John. "Have you, John?" she asked. There was mirth, slightly tinged with a healthy malice, in her voice.

"I haven't — yet," replied John. He wheeled to face his father. But where he had expected to find anger he met smiling assurance.

"Well, if you don't expect some young man who knows his own mind to beat you to it, you had better propose," said Michael Anstell.

For a moment John was taken aback. But only for a moment. He turned again to Jane. "Will you marry me?" he asked.

"You know I will," she replied.

Their hands met. Michael Anstell was a grim old man; not lightly were his wishes, his commands, to be taken. This smile upon his lips, that almost seemed to have crept into his eyes, too, might be some sneering mockery. Of course, he couldn't prevent their marriage. The same phrase rang in the minds of the young man and the young woman. Nevertheless, it lacked assurance; even the firm pressure of palm against palm seemed to indicate the lack of confidence of each. For Michael Anstell was the richest man in the world. In the minds of his son and of the girl who loved his son he suddenly loomed, in this moment of his apparent consent, more menacingly than ever he had done. For the first time in his life John Anstell actually was afraid of his father; for the first time in her life Jane Maynard feared any one.

"I congratulate you — both," said Michael Anstell.

Now, unbelievably, he was still smiling. The hand that he gave to each, as he advanced toward them, gripped theirs reassuringly.

"You — you've changed your mind," said Jane.

"What's a mind for?" demanded Michael Anstell.

"Are you going to kiss me — my daughter?" he asked.

His fury, his utter uncontrollable wrath, would have been something that Jane could have met calmly. It is the unexpected that always surprises us out of our self-possession. Strive to meet his old lips warmly though she might, she could not repress a shudder as they touched her own. The caress affected her as might the contact with some obscene thing. He was John's father. He had put his son's happiness above his own prejudices. She should be grateful to him, happy. Instead, she was afraid; she must steel herself not to shrink from this old man. She hoped that he didn't realize her inward struggle, that she appeared as grateful as he might expect. But she could not read the cold eyes that met her own.

"Darned decent of you, father," said John as his father turned to him.

Michael Anstell's lips curved in a smile. "Why? We all make mistakes; if we are sensible, we do our best to remedy them. However — I didn't make any mistake."

He paused as though expecting some question. None came from them. He continued, "You see, a man of large affairs — doesn't get to know his son. Business, finance. What sort of a son did I have? That's what I wanted to know. What sort of a girl had he fallen in love with? I wanted to know that, too.

"Can't find out things like that in a minute. Can't find them out without putting up some sort of test. Well, I ordered John to keep away from you, Jane." His mirthless smile — Jane felt that it was mirthless now —

swept his face. "I see how well he obeyed me. I sent for you, Miss Maynard — no, Jane, let it be."

"Please call me Jane," she said.

"Jane it is. Well, Jane, I sent for you. I wanted to know whether it was John or John's probable money that you wanted. I found out. If it was just his money, you know that I stood ready to buy him from you. You wanted John."

He shrugged his lean old shoulders and held up his hands, palms toward them. Jane noted the age blotches, those yellowish spots that stand for time, upon them.

"If you wanted each other, and were willing to fight for each other, to oppose me for each other, why should I interfere? All that I want, John, is your happiness. You must know that."

"Of course I do, father," exclaimed the son.

Michael Anstell turned to the girl. "You know that too, don't you, Jane?"

"Of course," she agreed. She tried to make her tone hearty, but felt her failure. For, creeping over her heart, chilling it in the moment when it should have been warm with joy, was something that she didn't understand, some feeling of vague distrust.

"Then that's all settled," said Michael Anstell. He rubbed his hands together, making Jane think, absurdly, of some bald old eagle congratulating itself.

"I want to talk to you," went on the old man. "Your love-making" — and he smiled his frigid smile again — "may wait, perhaps."

The girl blushed. The young man colored, too.

Michael Anstell sat down; he looked around the room. His eye lighted upon the table, where lay Morton Anderson's gift to the Foundation. "What's that money doing there?" he demanded.

Jane flushed. She explained the gift. "It's been —

I don't think I can explain it, Mr. Anstell. But — it's somehow — symbolical. If any one, after repeating the words that we require, takes that money — steals it — I'll feel that — I've failed."

"Suppose," suggested the old man practically, "that some one comes in without saying those words? What then?"

"I'll still feel that I've failed," said Jane.

"I haven't said them," said Anstell.

"Say them," said Jane.

"My neighbor is perfect," said the old man slowly. He laughed harshly. "You feel that your money is safe with me now?" he asked.

Gravely Jane regarded him. "It probably is," she said.

"Sit down," said the old man. His words snapped out commandingly. Mutely they obeyed him.

"I've been to see young Barnett, the man that wrote the article in the *Blade*. Bright young man. Good head on him. Take his word when I'd distrust lots of bigger men. Had a talk with him." He leaned suddenly forward. "Jane, do you realize how big your idea is?"

Slowly Jane shook her head. "What do you mean, Mr. Anstell?"

"Don't know that I know myself — exactly," he admitted. "But — I've been thinking. I'm not an easy bird to catch. Seen a lot of ideas come and go. Especially religious ones. They start off well enough, but, after all, they're filled with hokum that's meant to be hokum. The real thing — the world hasn't had it for centuries. Get me?"

"Go on," said Jane. She cast a side glance at John. His face was expressionless, save for a queer look about the eyes, a look, she thought, of amazement.

"The world," said Michael Anstell, "is war-worn and

weary. It's bleeding from a billion wounds; it's suffering from the oldest ailment known to humanity — hate. Suppose that hate could be cured? What would happen then?"

"The millennium," said Jane softly.

"Exactly. But the world can't wait much longer for the millennium. It's been waiting thousands of years. And what's it got? This last Great War, that's what it's got. And this last war is going to breed hundreds of other wars. It's a way wars have. Unless they're stopped."

He drew a long breath and then mopped his forehead with his handkerchief. "I'm no damn-fool pacifist — not the ordinary kind," he stated. "I don't believe in going unarmed into a den of thieves. That ain't the way to make peace in the world. You've got to get at the den of thieves first. Got to wipe it out. Oh," he went on hastily. "I know it sounds like the old bunk of the militarists, but it ain't." In his excitement he reverted to the ungrammatical, somewhat slangy speech of his early years. "There's a chance for something new. And the funny part of it is that it isn't new. The world has had it for nineteen hundred years, but never used it. Wipe out the den of thieves — yes! But how? Not by burning down the den, not by killing its inhabitants. But by changing them. How to do that? *Your way, Jane!*" he finished explosively.

"You mean ——"

"I mean that I've studied what you've been doing. You've got something, the biggest thing in the world this minute. The biggest thing since we forgot the teachings of Christ. And it can't offend anybody. 'My neighbor is perfect.' Jew or Gentile, Catholic, Protestant, Mohammedan! What's he got against that creed? Don't

his own religion teach him that? Then how can he object to your teaching it?"

"To my ——" Jane stared at him, her eyes eager.

"*You!* Nobody else. Only — the world can't wait. There's wars around the corner. There's hate everywhere. Society, civilization, is reeling from a thousand blows. How can it stand? It can't. Unless it gets a new idea. But the world don't get ideas. Ideas have to be forced on the world. Well — you're going to force your idea on the world."

"How?" The question came from John.

"Organization," snapped his father. "Organization," he repeated. "A man's got a great invention. The world needs it. But unless somebody gets behind him — *right* — the world never knows of it. Money! That's where I come in. Money. Millions — hundreds of millions! My last cent if it's needed. To cure the world. To heal it of its woe, its want, its misery and hate."

Deeply Jane breathed. Before her unfolded a vista that dazzled her. A clean world, a wholesome world. Yet, adown this vista seemed to walk something shapeless, something unclean. From far away she heard Michael Anstell saying:

"I'm going to give this world a Day of Faith."

CHAPTER XX

SLOWLY the amorphous unclear vision — if something that she only dimly apprehended could be given even so indefinite a name — faded from Jane's mind. A Day of Faith! The words themselves were thrilling, but the thought that they connoted was more so. Before the overwhelming possibilities that Michael Anstell's phrase opened up, no doubts could stand. She leaned eagerly toward him. "How?" she asked.

Anstell smiled at her excitement. "No details — yet," he replied. "But to-night — suppose, Jane, that you come to my house this evening, say at nine. I'll have a working plan formulated ——"

"You mean a universal Day of Faith?" interjected John.

"World-wide," said the father promptly.

"It'll cost ——" began John.

"Millions," finished his father. "But isn't it worth it?"

Again Jane noticed the odd expression in John's eyes, an expression that was not only amazement, but that was compounded of doubt also.

"Worth it?" he echoed vaguely. "Why — of course. Only ——" His voice died away.

The keen eyes of the father fixed themselves upon the son. "Only what?" he demanded.

Over John's face spread a blush. "Why," he said lamely, "I just — it will cost so *much* money."

Michael Anstell laughed. "I think that I've allowed for that, John." There was something peremptory in

his speech, in his manner, as he turned to Jane: "Tonight at nine, then, Jane?"

She could only stare at him and nod her assent. The old man suddenly smiled.

"You're going to be happy, you two," he said. "With a great work ahead of you, a work in which you're going to let me share." He ceased, as though his thoughts were too tremendous for verbal expression. His eyes roamed about the assembly hall of the Foundation, resting finally upon the bills weighted on the table. He nodded toward them. "A symbol, Jane, as you say," he said. "A symbol that will not fail us."

He held out his hand to her, and she rose and took it. Once again that queer, almost eerie sensation, as though indefinable obscenities touched her, crept over her. But he was the father of the man she loved; he was the man who had just announced his amazing intention of making her modest Foundation a world affair. She returned the pressure of his hand.

"I don't like to take you away, John," he said, "but — there are things to be done —"

"Certainly, father," said his son. He, perhaps, was more dazed than Jane. He knew his father better. This amazing right-about was something on which he wished to ponder. To remain would be to meet questions from Jane. Until he knew a little better *exactly* what his father planned — He left with Michael Anstell. And in ten minutes he was convinced not merely of his father's sincerity, but of the practicality of his promise. For Michael Anstell rarely loosed his enthusiasm, but when he did, harder-headed men than John Anstell believed him.

Left alone, Jane went to her own room. There, once again, she stared at her mirrored reflection. She studied herself with that extreme modesty that sometimes comes

to the person who loves and who finds herself or himself equally beloved. It is a rare thing, this modesty. But that is because so few know what love really is. To most it is the gratification of desire, of vanity. But to Jane Maynard it was a complete surrender of self, and in the moment following surrender she appraised the value of that which she had given. She conceded that her face had charm, that her figure was graceful. But to have won the love of John Anstell required more than these. Was she worthy of him? Did she deserve such great happiness? And how simply, how inevitably, they had slipped into love. She had not realized how close it was.

She would do her best to make him a good wife. Slowly her thoughts drifted away from herself, from John, to that amazing man, his father. To put organization behind a simple expression of faith, to spread it over the world. Could it be done? But, even if it couldn't, to *try* to make a world embrace it—— Quixotic, mad! Would a world bred in hate turn from its teachings? To *try*. . . .

The colored woman told her that Mr. Barnett wished to see her. She was glad of the interruption of her thoughts, for suddenly they had become so bewildering, the project on which they centered had become so vast, that her head ached from contemplation of it. She went downstairs to meet the reporter.

"Thought I'd drop around, Miss Maynard," was his first speech. "Thought maybe you'd make that temporary cure of mine a permanent one."

She looked at him. Despite the evidences of meanness upon his face, she looked around, through his eyes, into the soul of him. She was not tremendously sophisticated, if the word is used in its baser sense. Yet she knew enough of life to understand that what we sometimes think

are basic indications of character are but surface signs of surface characteristics. A dissipated face. Dissipation makes for meanness. But if dissipation ceases, meanness sometimes vanishes. And he had written about her in the *Blade*, written sincerely, honestly. Though his speech was somewhat flippant now, she understood the embarrassment that caused it, and which he could not altogether hide.

"I can't cure anything," she told him gravely.

"Your idea did — last night," he stated.

She shrugged. "You might have imagined it," she said.

"Perhaps I only imagine that I am lame now," he retorted. "Do you think that?"

She shook her head. "No, Mr. Barnett."

"You don't believe that a cripple can be healed by the mind, then?"

Again she shook her head. "Not by the mind. By the soul — perhaps. Mr. Barnett, do any of us know what we really believe?"

He smiled. "You know that you believe in the idea printed above your door here, don't you?"

"I do," she said.

"So do I," he told her. He took out a cigarette and looked at her for permission. She granted it with a nod. He lighted it. He shifted his weight uneasily from one foot to the other. She remembered his lameness again, and inwardly rated herself because she had not asked him to sit down. She did so now and supplemented the invitation with a suggestion of tea. He accepted, and she left him for a moment while she asked the colored maid to prepare it. When she returned, Barnett was staring at the money on the table. He looked up with a start.

"Miss Maynard," he said, "you don't know, perhaps, that the owner of the *Blade* expected a very different

article from me; that I violated all newspaper ethics in what I wrote? ”

“ You can hardly expect me to censure you,” she smiled.

“ I don’t,” he said. “ Neither do I expect you to be censured by Michael Anstell. You know that he owns the *Blade*? ”

“ He just left here,” she told him.

“ And just before that he left me. That’s why I’m over here,” said Barnett. “ He — his son was at my rooms earlier in the day; then came the father. Miss Maynard, you don’t use a bib, do you? ”

She stared at him in perplexity.

“ Children wear bibs,” he said. “ Their mothers or their nurses select their food, help them guide each spoonful to their mouths. You see, the children have an idea — that they are hungry. But they can’t execute the idea without aid. Miss Maynard, you aren’t an infant. You are beyond the bib period.”

“ I hope,” she said, “ that you are not intimating that I am an old woman, Mr. Barnett.”

He did not answer her smile in kind. He frowned. “ I’m intimating several things, Miss Maynard. I might also remind you of the Trojan proverb: ‘ I fear the Greeks even when they bring gifts.’ ”

“ And why do you warn me? ” she asked.

“ Michael Anstell told me to-day that he had no objection to his son’s marrying you. He lies, Miss Maynard. If he lies to me, he’ll lie to you — ”

“ Aren’t you the least bit — ”

“ Presumptuous? Of course I am. But — ”

“ Mr. Anstell has been here, Mr. Barnett. He — is going to — to back my idea — ”

The maid entered with the tea things. The interruption gave Jane time to compose herself, gave Barnett

time to think. After the maid had gone, the inevitable questions as to lemon, sugar, cream, and the equally inevitable responses gave each a further breathing space. For, oddly enough, they looked upon each other as antagonists.

"So he's going to back your idea, Miss Maynard? Do you mind telling me why? And how?" asked Barnett finally.

She stared at him. Somehow the impression of meanness was gone from his face as he put the question. Of course it was none of his business; he had been grossly impertinent. But he had written that article in the *Blade*; further, there was a tenseness about his attitude that made her understand that not mere gratuitous rudeness actuated him.

"Why not?" she said. "He is going, Mr. Barnett, to give the world a Day of Faith."

"How?" he asked laconically.

"I don't think that he's planned it all yet," she replied.

"Money, of course," he suggested.

"He said — millions," she told him.

"Millions," said Barnett thoughtfully. "On the idea that yesterday he thought ridiculous, on a girl whom yesterday he thought insane. And all because — so he told me — he loves his son. Do you believe him, Miss Maynard?"

"I don't understand you," she said.

He smiled cynically. "You are beyond the bib age, Miss Maynard. You understand me."

"I'm afraid that I don't," she insisted. "And I'm — rather busy, Mr. Barnett —"

He rose. "Of course, Miss Maynard, I've been unpardonably rude, interfering, only — have you ever studied religions?"

"Studied them? Why — not so ——"

"I thought not. You've never realized, then, why creeds fail?"

She smiled. "Can any one explain that, Mr. Barnett?"

"I can," he replied. "In one word — money. They're built on hope and faith and charity, these new creeds of the past two thousand years, Miss Maynard. Oh, on fanaticism too, but that doesn't matter. It's hope for something better, faith in something better. That's their foundation. They grow. They attract numbers. Numbers mean money, power. And the unscrupulous attach themselves to the blind believers, and — you have what you have to-day: Christian churches that have forgotten all that Christ taught, that speak no longer the word of the Saviour, but the word of the money changers whom He scourged from the Temple.

"Money, Miss Maynard! The root of evil! Do you want it defiling your simple creed so soon?"

She was bewildered by the suddenness and vigor of his attack.

"But, Mr. Barnett, you have no right to talk this way."

"Of course I haven't," he agreed.

"You don't even know what Mr. Anstell is planning."

"Do you?" he countered.

"Why — his plans — I don't know them — yet. But I will. He wants to spread the Hendricks doctrine all over the world ——"

"Why?" demanded Barnett.

"Why?" she echoed vaguely. "Why — because he believes in it."

Barnett laughed. "Do you think he does?"

"Of course," she said simply. Then, thoroughly angered now, she broke into vehement speech. "Mr. Bar-

nett, the world is war-worn, hate-worn. Mr. Anstell believes that what we are doing down here in Carey Street can be done all over the world. Why, your insinuations — are ridiculous. It will cost Mr. Anstell millions. Why should he —— ” She suddenly colored vividly. “ He wishes his son to marry me,” she said.

It was a queer thing for her to say; the daughter of Marley Maynard discussing her love affair with a man whom she barely knew. But his innuendoes frightened her, although she could not understand why.

“ So he told me,” said Barnett.

“ Why should he tell you? ” she demanded. “ Why should he discuss me with you? ”

“ Because I warned him to keep his newspapers and his shyster lawyers away from you, Miss Maynard. That’s why .”

“ You did that? ” The anger faded from her eyes as she held out her hand to him. “ That was — fine of you, Mr. Barnett.”

He shrugged, one might have thought, impatiently. But Jane knew that he was embarrassed. Suddenly she liked Tom Barnett. His past might not be the most pleasant thing in the world, but — he was no coward, and he was honest.

“ Not at all,” he said. “ I — you’re delivering the goods, Miss Maynard, and I’m for any one who can deliver. That’s why —— ”

“ And you don’t want me to — deliver — on a bigger scale? ” she interrupted.

“ I don’t want you interfered with. I want you to go slowly —— ”

“ That’s the very thing,” she cried. “ Slowly! With a world bruised, bleeding, crying out for light —— ”

“ And Michael Anstell is to be the little torch bearer, eh? ” He chuckled. “ Somehow, you know, Michael

Anstell doesn't appeal to me as a prophet of the Golden Rule, Miss Maynard. His past —— ”

“ You have no past yourself, Mr. Barnett, of course? ” she asked sweetly.

He colored. Then he laughed. “ Fair enough, Miss Maynard. I'm afraid that I'm a sort of cynical person. I wish that — you'd go slow.”

“ Youth isn't ordinarily so conservative,” she said.

“ I'm not,” he told her. “ Only — well, it's none of my business, anyway.”

“ Oh, but it is,” she said. “ Your article unquestionably made Mr. Anstell investigate, see things differently. It is your business, Mr. Barnett.”

“ That's kind of you,” he told her. He saw that she was acquitting him of rudeness and was grateful for her tact.

He rose to his feet. He felt suddenly awkward. “ If I can — be of any help, Miss Maynard — any time — I'd like to, you know.”

“ Thank you, Mr. Barnett.” Impulsively she held out her hand, and he took it. She saw him color furiously, but her heart was too filled with another man to wonder why.

Once again in her room she sat before the mirror. But this time she eyed herself not searchingly, but only mechanically, as she arranged her hair for the evening. She gave herself over again to the thrill that had been aroused by the promise of Michael Anstell. To be the bringer of a new ideal, to spread kindness, happiness, into a crazed world.

She was sorry for Tom Barnett. A cynic, he distrusted everybody, everything. A sudden fear shook her. Was Michael Anstell pretending in order somehow to separate her from John? Had this been his meaning?

Was this the plan behind his strange enthusiasm, his amazing promise?

But she wouldn't believe it. What good would it do him? Little as she knew Michael Anstell, she read him well enough to know that his methods would not be wild, aimless. If he wanted to separate John and herself, there were other more direct ways than pretending to approve of her ideas.

Another thought came to her, contradicting this last conclusion: Was he intending to make her ridiculous before the world? Then, proudly, her shoulder squared. Bland Hendricks had died for that idea. Who was she to shrink at thought of ridicule? Moreover, what was ridiculous in what she was doing? It was Truth she preached; a forgotten truth that must now prevail in the world. Again: Was she not, in these doubts of Michael Anstell, denying this creed of hers? How could she expect others to believe if she disbelieved? Michael Anstell was perfect as the rest of the world.

"'Physician, heal thyself,'" she murmured.

CHAPTER XXI

SLINKING along, fearful lest the eye of Allen or some other plain-clothes man light upon him, Yegg Darby was grateful for the hour. It was after dark, and although the lights illuminated the doorway of the Hendricks Foundation, although the city's arc lights outlined each face that passed beneath them, there were nevertheless dark spots where one's features were not recognizable.

Of course he didn't know any particular reason why Allen or any other police official should annoy him now. But on general principles they might arrest him. And there was something else. If it is true that the police have sources of inside information as to the doings of the professional criminals, it is equally true that rumors seep down from police headquarters to the haunts of the underworld. Somehow, through somebody, the word had been spread that Yegg Darby was a "squealer." He had tipped a bull to Montreal Sammy, and that good man and true was back in Sing Sing doing his life stretch.

Not to revenge the betrayal of Montreal Sammy, but to put a dangerous citizen out of the way, to prevent possible future betrayal of another: for this might some one, lurking in a shadow, speed a bullet from his "gat" to the utter undoing of Yegg Darby, the Squealer. It behooved Yegg Darby to walk softly, to mind his ways. So twice he passed the Foundation without entering. It was all very well to take what stock you chose in the rigmarole carved above the doorway, but a wise guy may believe that words are more potent than lethal weapons and still preserve a wholesome respect for the latter.

Suppose, just suppose, that every one in this neighborhood didn't happen to believe in that junk they tossed you at the Foundation! One of the disbelievers would as soon bump a guy off in the light of its electric lights as around the corner up a dark alley.

There were too many people entering the Foundation. Yegg Darby bit his finger nails. He simply had to see "the nutty dame that ran the dump." No way out of it. He didn't know why he had to; he didn't understand himself. If he had been offered a thousand dollars to explain his actions of to-day, he could never have earned the thousand.

Something had happened to Yegg Darby, the Squealer, the Stool. It wasn't religion. He would have jeered you justly had you uttered so silly a suggestion. It wasn't fear. The yellowest rat of the underworld, as he had been truly described, he nevertheless possessed the rat's ability to fight when cornered. If it had been fear that had actuated him, it would have been far easier to make a getaway than deliberately to visit Sing Sing. If it had been fear, he would have spread the news broadcast that he and Montreal Sammy were pals again.

No, it had been something else. Perhaps, though Yegg Darby didn't know it, it had been that longing for friendship that exists in all of us. He'd done Montreal Sammy dirt. Montreal Sammy was the only living human who had tolerated him. He must square it somehow. He must regain standing in the eyes of Montreal Sammy, even though the rest of the world continued to despise him.

And so he lurked in the neighborhood of the Foundation, trying to spur himself up to the point of entrance. It was while he still fought for courage to do so that a taxi paused before the entrance. A minute later he saw Jane Maynard descend the steps and cross the sidewalk.

Yegg Darby ran across the street. "'Scuse me, Miss Maynard, but I gotta talk to you," was his introductory remark.

Jane paused and looked at him. The lights from the building that she had just left fell full upon his face. On the steps of the Foundation stood a man; from his lips came the sneering words, "Squealer, stool!"

She turned swiftly, but the man passed into the house. She did not recognize him, but his words helped her in recognition of the one who accosted her. He was the man who had burglariously entered the Foundation with Montreal Sammy and had been knocked down by that warrior. His treachery was evidently known to the world, and not even imminent recital of the Hendricks creed had prevented the man on the steps from voicing his sentiments. "You wanted me?" she said.

"I been to see Montreal Sammy," said Darby.

"Yes?"

"Ye-ah. He can see a visitor once a mont', lady, and knowin' there wasn't any one likely to call on him, I breezed up to-day. I had a talk wit' Montreal. Y'see" — Darby fought hard for expression of sentiments that were chaotic, that he didn't comprehend — "I hadda see him. Y'understand?"

"I think so," said Jane gently.

"T'anks," said Darby. "Y'see, me and Montreal — well, lady, I threw him hard."

"And you're sorry. Is that it?" asked Jane.

Darby sneered. "Aw, hell, Miss Maynard, that bunk is all right for the left-footed gang that come and graft on you, but it don't mean nothin' to me. Sorry? No. Not exactly. I — I dunno."

He didn't know; Jane understood. He *was* sorry, ashamed of himself, but never having experienced such an emotion before, it was unrecognizable to him now.

"Of course. You saw him. To-day?"

"I had quite a chin wit' him. He's lost his noive, Montreal has, ma'am. He says to me, 'Tell Miss Maynard that she said she'd get me out; I'm waitin' for her to make good.' That's what he said, ma'am."

"Thank you," said Jane gravely. Then, as Yegg Darby shuffled uneasily, she said, "Wouldn't you like to go inside? No one will harm you there."

"In there?" Darby sneered. "Lady, I ain't no lily-fingered reformed guy, I ain't. I'm a crook, I am. I'm a stool too when it comes to that. But I ain't a faker. I'll travel me own lane, ma'am." He drew a long breath. "Y'see, ma'am, I got it straight that Montreal wasn't sore on me. Got it dead straight. Y'coulda knocked me for a goal wit' a feather when I heard that. So I goes up to see him, to get the dope on it. Well, ma'am, I expect to find him filled wit' religion and bunk, but he ain't. He says religion is sucker stuff, and he comes right out and says that you are the biggest come-on of them all. Only, he says, he thinks you're goin' to put it over, and he's stringin' a bet on you to get him out. Does he copper that bet?"

Gravely Jane replied, "He plays it straight, place, and show."

Yegg Darby stepped back; he stared admiringly at her. "Lady, I hand it to you. I got a hunch you'll make good on the play. And I guess that'll be all. So long, ma'am."

"So long," said Jane. She was attempting no individual reformations. To her there were no such things as individuals. There was a world, and each person in it helped make it up. To plead with Yegg Darby meant a concession that he was not perfect. Did she believe this creed herself? Once again she asked herself the question. Then she smiled at the retreating back of Yegg Darby.

He was a person with a certain outlook on life; that was all. He harmed no one but himself, and one who harmed nobody must be as perfect as any one else. But it was all sort of a jumble. When abstractions became concrete, doubts crept in. She must not permit them. She must think of what lay ahead of her; she must think of Darby's message; Montreal Sammy relied on her. Well, she would keep her word. She would get him out of prison — somehow!

It was with this thought that she entered the taxi, and the thought was still with her when she alighted before the mansion of Michael Anstell. The imprisoned burglar relied on her; she would not fail him. And then, because she was very human, she forgot Montreal Sammy as John Anstell ran down the steps of his father's house, like any plebeian lover, to meet her.

She, too, felt plebeian; she wanted to kiss him there; but she smiled at her own unconventional desire and primly permitted him to pay the taximan.

But there was a delicious interlude in the hall when a liveried man's back was turned, and she was able to forget that responsibilities of birth and position weighed upon her natural instincts. They kissed.

Michael Anstell was in his great library when Jane, ushered by John, entered the somber room, not too well lighted by candelabra ravished from a European palace. He sat at the head of a long oval table, and he rose and greeted her with an almost feverish cordiality. He came to the door and took her hand in his; as though he were some great emperor greeting some visiting queen, he turned toward the group of men about the table, all of whom had risen and were staring expectantly at her.

He had manner, had Michael Anstell, although until now Jane had not suspected it. But power, used purposefully, marks its possessor. Michael Anstell was the

most purposeful man of his day and generation. And the most powerful. Because he was in absolute control of his mind and heart, he possessed manner, for manner is self-control, little more.

"Gentlemen," he said, "this is Miss Jane Maynard."

His words were simple; Jane, slightly embarrassed by the impressiveness of his manner, had feared more. But the simple words seemed more effectual than an elaboration of them would have been. The men at the table bowed almost in unison. They were the courtiers to whom the visiting queen was being made known. And now, as her eyes became better accustomed to the dim light, she began to recognize faces in the gathering.

Heilbrun, president of the Thirty-first National Bank, the foremost banker in the United States, had visited her father's home when she was younger. She acknowledged his introduction with a smile. Elbertson, the biggest textile man in the East, she had never met before. But she had seen his picture many times in the public prints. She knew quite well the daughter, now married to an English nobleman, of Kynaston, of whom it was said that the railroads personally owned by him would encircle the globe. He controlled other thousands of miles. Blodgett was the biggest petroleum man in America; she liked his scared-rabbit air; it was so completely in contrast with his real self, which was that, she'd been told, of an old-time buccaneer. And there was also Surmase. He, outside of Anstell, was the most interesting man of the group. Like Anstell's, his early beginnings were enshrouded in mystery. Like Anstell, beginning with nothing, he had achieved a colossal fortune, second only to the immensity of Anstell's wealth. He had laid the foundations of his fortune by establishing a chain of food stores. Later he had acquired control of huge wheat tracts, of stock yards, of cattle ranges in North and

South America. The world, quite literally, ate from the hand of William Surmase.

They were names to stagger one, the names of this half dozen, — six of them, each, besides his pet interest, heavily involved in scores, hundreds, of other industries, of trust companies, of banks. She sat down, a bit bewildered.

Anstell tapped on the table. There was instant silence. Jane felt the eyes of the others upon her; over the shoulder of Blodgett she met the glance of John; he smiled at her; and suddenly she became cool, lost the flustered feeling that had been with her.

“Miss Maynard, we are busy men — all of us. You are a busy woman. We won’t waste time. Will you please state, as briefly as possible, the nature of the work on which you are at present engaged?”

His matter-of-fact tones robbed the situation of possible embarrassment to Jane. As calmly and incisively as Michael Anstell spoke, she replied, “To spread, to those who wish to hear it, the doctrine of Bland Hendricks,” she told them.

“And that doctrine,” said Anstell, “consists simply of the phrase, ‘My neighbor is perfect.’” He looked from man to man of the gathering. “Gentlemen,” he said impressively, “I’m not going to review recent history. You know the Great War, its purposes and its outcome. You know that we were told, and some of us were foolish enough to believe, that it was the war to end war. We know that there are wars going on this very moment in every corner of the globe. We know that not merely are governments at war with other governments, but peoples are at war with governments of their own choice, their own making. We know that crime is with us as it never was before; that religious prejudice is lifting its ugly head, that race hatred snarls from

every nook and cranny of the earth. Gentlemen, why?

"I ask you that. A world is asking itself that question. And the answer is simple: because hate rules the world. Another question arises: Why does hate rule the world? Because, gentlemen, hate is instilled in the bosom of every living human almost from infancy. Babes draw it in with their mothers' milk. Hate! The thing that makes wars, pestilences, famines, revolutions.

"We have great religions established on the foundations of love. But the edifices have grown so tall that men have forgotten the foundations. Men come along with new creeds. But they are complex, bewildering, and in the rules laid down in them one loses sight of the simple faith that underlies them all. Words supersede deeds; doctrinaires usurp the place of ministers of God; the word of man crowds out the word of Christ.

"Gentlemen, I am not a religious man, as the term is usually understood. I haven't set foot in a church in nearly fifty years. I never expect to set foot in one. For churches are not the houses of God; they are the houses of man.

"We have seen, recently, how the Christian churches, of certain similar denominations, tried to get together. They failed. It doesn't matter why they failed; it is sufficient that they did. And even if they had got together, immense congregations, belonging to quite different faiths, would have been outside the united fold.

"But if, gentlemen, the Jew, the Catholic, the Baptist, the Buddhist, the Mohammedan, the Confucianist — if all these were given something in addition to what they already have, something without rules, without man-made doctrine, something taught already in their own religions — could they quarrel with it? Is it not possible that faith may overcome the prejudices of creed?

"I say that it is!"

His voice, vigorous despite his years, seemed to boom the word. The sunken eyes gleamed with fervor. "Gentlemen, the world can't go on as it has been doing. Civilization is being wrecked, and only because Christianity is no longer Christian, because Jewry is no longer Jewish, because the other religions have become so imbedded in silly formula that one cannot find the germ of truth once contained therein.

"The war has not freed the world; it has enslaved it. We are more militaristic than ever before. So is England, so is France, so is Japan. We fought for freedom, and what have we? We have a rule of suspicion, of fear, of distrust of our neighbor, his ethics, his intentions, his desires.

"Bigots are enthroned. The day of the spy is upon us. And the spy does not make for goodness; he makes for hatred, distrust, hidden vice. Stupidity reigns. And where we have stupidity we have viciousness. Each of us says to himself that he alone is perfect, that his neighbor is vile. The city man hates the farmer; the farmer hates the city man. The churchgoer thinks that the man outside the congregation is damned eternally; the atheist thinks the religious man is an idiot. We have before us, threatening us with a modern Inquisition, a wave of dishonest reformation, a wave of governmental control of our private lives in the interest of what bigots think is good for us.

"And with what shall a world combat this wave? With only one thing: a complete wiping out of the differences of creed, petty and childish when they are not rankly superstitious, that threaten to engulf us in internecine quarrel.

"How? By the substitution of a universal faith in man. We have worshiped gods for thousands of years. And each god has been subtly changed by each genera-

tion. Yesterday our god frowned at one thing; to-day he frowns at another; to-morrow yet something else will arouse his wrath. And never have the earthly sponsors of these gods told us to worship man.

"Miss Maynard does not tell us to do that. But she tells us to see him as perfect. Herein her creed differs from all others. All others have told us to strive for perfection in ourselves. We have striven and, thinking that we have achieved, we condemn our neighbor who does not see eye to eye with us. But if we forget ourselves, forget our greeds, our hatreds, our *selves*, and think only of our neighbor, what shall we have?"

"The millennium," said Surmase dryly.

"Exactly," said Anstell. "And I'll subscribe fifty millions to bring the millennium here."

"Can it be bought?" demanded Blodgett.

"It can," said Michael Anstell.

"Then I'm for it," said Blodgett.

Dazed, dreamily, Jane listened to them pledge their millions for a cause as yet not outlined. It was the second victory, although she had not seen it yet, in that conquest of the world that had begun when the newspapers had used the word "miracle."

CHAPTER XXII

JANE was frankly bewildered by what followed. There was talk of "campaigns," of committees, of budgets, of subscription lists. The fact that they were seriously considering Michael Anstell's amazing proposition was in itself bewildering. These were hard-headed men, of great affairs. That they should yield to any religious emotionalism was beyond comprehension. For she did not understand the motives actuating them. Michael Anstell did, however, and cunningly he played upon their fears.

For he had not exaggerated when he had described the world's condition. India, Ireland, and Egypt seethed with revolt against the British rule. Armed troops confronted each other in Poland. Bolshevist Russia still hurled defiance at the world.

These were bad enough; but worse was in the world. Not a day passed but another conflict between capital and labor was shrieked from the front pages of the press. There had been a wave of crime unparalleled in American history. In one year, just closed, there had been eighteen thousand fires listed as suspicious. A leading newspaper asked editorially if we had become a nation of incendiarists. Armed blacks confronted armed whites in a Southern city. The negro press adopted a defiant tone. Domestic scandal raged as never in our history. The sickening details of divorce charges and countercharges stank from the court rooms. A whole nation jeered at a Federal law, and not to have violated it in some fashion rendered one liable to the charge of being a mollicoddle.

A whole world has been lifted to the supreme heights of sacrifice and devotion during the Bloody Years. In its reaction it seemed to have sunk to depths of infamy undreamed of before.

The world snarled. Like angry little boys, men seemed, but the little boys had the adult's strength, and the cunning of demons had armed them. And these men to whom Michael Anstell talked knew these things. And feared them. They wanted peace. Not merely peace between nations, but peace between political parties, peace between the various orders of society, peace between man and man. Not one of them but could glimpse the prospect unfolded vaguely by the words of Michael Anstell.

There is a belief in the world that millionaires, men of great deeds in the domains of finance, differ in nature from their humbler fellows. Sycophants glorify them, prating of their vivid and colorful imaginations, the great dreams that they dream. Anarchists sneer at them, condemning the greed which, they claim, is their only animating motive.

Both are wrong. The millionaire differs from his less successful brother only in the possession of an acquisitive knack. It is this that piles up his fortune, not his great imagination, not his tremendous greed. For he is no more greedy than his brother in poverty. Greed is a universal human trait. We honor unselfishness because it is rare.

The millionaire, nine times out of ten, began in poverty. He must have had the same qualities when poor as when rich. To lie, to cheat, to steal, to hate, — these are the universal qualities, belonging to rich and poor, to the whole and the halt.

But with great possessions always comes conservatism. These men who sat with Michael Anstell had been daring, all of them, in their youth. They were so no longer.

They wanted to keep what they held. And the world's unrest made them fear their ability to hold what they had.

Yet it was not through conscious greed that they acquiesced in the plan, the grandiose plan, of Michael Anstell. They were conservative. But they believed that only in conservatism was there righteousness. Long possession of their wealth had made them used to it; a world in which they should not have wealth would be an unbelievable world. Who would provide work for those who labored unless the rich did so?

The State? Absurd. The State could not run its own essential business, much less those industries which depended on man's greed for their efficiency.

Only by themselves, or by men like them, could the world proceed in that order which is so dear to him who hath. They supported great charities; they were always in the forefront of works done for the public weal. And, despite the cries of the agitators, their motives were not always venal.

They believed in goodness; they liked goodness. That they had acquired their colossal fortunes by methods that could stand no ethical test was something that never bothered them. For, like all successful men, whether the success be gained in war, in politics, in the arts, in science, or in finance, they believed that there was something in their fiber that differentiated them from the common herd, that their success had been *intended*. Self-justification is the commonest of vices.

So, with a world gone mad, it is not to be wondered at that when one so great, so colossal, as Michael Anstell told them that only by a world-wide religion could order be restored, they cheerfully agreed with him and backed their acquiescence with their money. For they considered themselves stewards of the public weal. Religion was

good for people; they believed in it; it was the correct and proper thing for men of their position to do. That Anstell proposed spending fabulous amounts on the promulgation of the new creed made no difference. If a thing was worth while, it should be well worth while. Michael Anstell had carefully chosen his men.

It was late when Jane arrived at the Foundation, and she was glad that the building was deserted save for the colored cook, whose snores seemed to shake the building. Because she was tired she reluctantly dismissed John at the door.

For the first time since she had come down to Carey Street she regretted the lack of a personal maid. For she was wearied, so wearied that for half an hour she made no effort to remove her clothing, but lay fully dressed upon her bed.

She felt strangely apprehensive. What sort of forces had she set in motion? What was it that Surmase had said? She remembered. He had called her the modern Joan of Arc, had said that she too had heard voices, voices which would direct a world to freedom from its slavery.

Suddenly, for the moment, she regretted the career into which she had been plunged, seemingly by no volition of her own. For she was normal. She liked golf, tennis, riding, motoring, swimming, dancing; even an occasional mild flirtation had not been banned before she had fallen in love with John Anstell.

There was nothing abnormal about her. She was conscious of her own sanity, despite those clouded months when nervous exhaustion had conquered her. But that period was past. She was *normal*.

She was just a young, healthy girl, who loved life.

Surmase was silly. So were the rest of them. She'd disclaimed their praise. What on earth had she done?

Nothing save endeavor to spread, ever so slightly, the doctrine of Bland Hendricks. And now, instead of being a seven days' wonder for the city of New York to laugh at, she would be a world figure — she didn't think she liked the idea.

If she'd written a great play, she'd not shrink from glory. If she'd done heroic deeds in Flanders, she'd not shirk public acclaim. But to face publicity, world-wide publicity, because she simply had an ethical idea to which she was trying to adapt her life —

The thing was too terrific, too tremendous. And Michael Anstell was so certain. That certainty appalled her. To provide the world with ethics as one provided it with groceries —

She must preserve her sense of proportion. The kindly flattery of the Surmases must not unbalance her. To be overly religious is to be unbalanced. Suddenly she laughed. Michael Anstell and the others were absurd. Their grandiose idea would be a colossal joke.

And then she wondered.

For what had inflamed a world to righteous wrath in the Bloody Years just past? Not greed, not hate, but a passionate desire for justice, for righteousness in the world. It didn't matter that peoples had been deceived by governments, that profiteers had fattened while heroes died. The great fact was that the world flamed for decency.

If men had marched to battle for the right, would they disdain a simple act of faith? Men had died for gods, for creeds, for lands, for flags, for ideals. Would they not live for each other? It *was* possible. Perhaps it had never been possible before, but to-day, in the war-worn world, men looked for something else, something better. The Bloody Years had chastened them. Even though now, in fierce reaction from war and war's discipline, a

world acted like untutored savages, it was only temporary reaction. Michael Anstell's method was right.

Yet, as she undressed and fell into exhausted sleep, she heard, ringing faintly through her brain, the words of Tom Barnett. He had said that money killed all faith and left only creed. She would convince him otherwise.

The colored woman awoke her, bringing coffee and fruit. She placed the tray on a table by Jane's bed. For her mistress she had begun to acquire an affection which reconciled her to living in what she still termed a "crazy house." She beamed now upon the sleepy girl.

"Honey," she said, "you sure better look your prettiest this mawnin'."

"Why?" asked Jane.

"Movies," said the colored woman unctuously. "Yas'm, movies."

Jane stared at her, bewildered. The woman explained. Moving-picture operators, as well as reporters, were downstairs. Until now, for some reason known only to the news-film companies themselves, she had not been thought worthy of cinema immortalization. But that bit of privacy was gone with the others now.

She understood when she got downstairs. Michael Anstell was not one to let time be wasted. Not merely had he informed his own newspapers of his great plan, but the news associations, the film companies, these also had been told. And their representatives were here this morning.

But there was little for her to tell them. They seemed to know more than she had learned last night. Michael Anstell believed that the world was ready for a new order of things. He hoped that the governments of the world would designate, officially, a day on which the peoples of the world would utter the creed of the Hendricks Foundation.

"Great stuff," said one young reporter. "Got anything to say, Miss Maynard? Anything new?"

Jane found that she hadn't. She felt some little pique because Michael Anstell seemed to have said everything that was to be said. But she put it from her. This was no private matter; it was something that involved the happiness, the well-being of the world. And so she posed for the cameras and chatted gayly with the reporters, who no longer eyed her as though she were some curiously afflicted being. For had not Michael Anstell, and Surmase, and the others indorsed her? Had not wealth approved of her? Overnight, though Jane did not know it, the opinion of the world would change. If money approved her ideas, then — there must be something in those ideas.

For millionaires do not spend money on chimeras. The veriest cub reporters knew immediately that money, oceans of money, were to be poured out, must be poured out, in the backing of Jane's creed. One might jeer at one wealthy, cultured girl who preached a millennium. But one listened respectfully when millions gravely spoke. She could sense the feeling of respect, although she had not analyzed it yet.

Alone, finally, conscious that this had been her first real interview, and wondering how what she had said would appear when put into type, she left the Foundation to attend a needed conference with her dressmaker.

Later she lunched with John. She told him of her morning's interview.

"Until to-day," she said, "I've not said anything about the Hendricks idea. But this morning I — gabbled, John. Instead of letting the idea speak for itself, I spoke for it."

He smiled. "It can ask no more potent champion," he assured her.

Her brows knitted. "That's exactly it. Of course I know that it's all wonderful, but — some one spoke to me yesterday about the danger of letting money control religion —"

"Of course," she added hastily, "I know that your father's intentions are — well, noble. That's all I can call them. But — it had me worried a bit. And I'm worried again. Why should any one have to speak for, or advertise a truth? Isn't the truth itself sufficient?"

John laughed. "Of course it is. But if people don't know that the truth exists — see?"

She smiled uncertainly. "Oh, I'm silly. But ——"

"What's in it for father? Is that the idea?" he asked.

She shrugged distastefully. "John!"

"Don't be afraid of hurting my feelings," he smiled. "Believe me, I asked myself the question a good many times last night. It's a pretty fierce thing, to doubt your father, but — I have. But I've studied it from every angle. What's in it for father? Moreover, we have to see every one as perfect, even that scoundrelly old dad of mine, eh?"

"I do," she protested.

He laughed. "Well, I don't. I admire him, and I love him, I suppose. I don't know much about filial affection, though. I've never had much chance to practice it. But this time —— He's putting up fifty millions. I can't get back of that."

And now his own doubts banished hers. "You mustn't be so cynical, so — untrusting."

"I'll try not to be," he grinned. "Anyway, it's a great scheme."

"Scheme?" she echoed. She felt vaguely hurt.

"Well, idea, plan, whatever you want to call it," he amended.

"I call it a hope," she told him.

"Call it what you will," he grinned. "At the moment the salvation of the world doesn't concern me at all. I'm with a pretty girl whom I love and who, I think, loves me, and the world can go hang."

"You shouldn't talk that way," she protested.

He eyed her seriously. "Listen to me, Jane," he said. "You and dad have embarked upon a big project. I'll concede it. I'm *for* it. I think that it will do a lot of good. It may establish more kindness, more generosity, in the world. But, meantime, you don't have to make an early Christian martyr of yourself. You don't even have to be a modern missionary. Don't talk shop or think it all the time, Jane."

She laughed merrily. "Shop? What a crude person you are, John Anstell."

"I'll say I am, old thing," he told her. "I'm so darned crude that I'm thinking a lot more of my happiness than of the world's. How about yourself?"

He was good to look at, and the merriment in his eyes challenged her. "Me too," she told him with a smile. And the hovering waiter sneered contemptuously. They were boobs. Wait till they had seven children and they'd regret this mushy stuff. He knew. He'd tell the world he knew.

But he didn't tell the world, and so, unconscious of the progeny that he had wished upon them, John and Jane continued luncheon and love-making.

Afterward they separated because John had to see his father and Jane must go to the dressmaker again. Here she was detained two hours and arrived at the Foundation late in the afternoon.

There, in the hall, stood Tom Barnett. His excitement was patent. He seized her right hand in both of

his. "Virtue," he cried, "is not its only reward, Miss Maynard."

She felt strangely glad to see him, considering that her thoughts had been filled the last few hours exclusively with another man. She permitted her hand to remain in his for a moment. Then, withdrawing it, she asked, "When did you make that momentous discovery, Mr. Barnett?"

He drew out his watch and gravely consulted it. "One hour and eleven minutes and sixteen seconds ago, Miss Maynard."

"I love accuracy," she told him. She wondered that this young man, toward whom she had felt antagonistic yesterday, could arouse her lighter side as John Anstell did not seem to do. Perhaps, though, she was so much in love with John that she could think only emotionally when with him.

"So do I," he said. "Always have. If I hadn't — well, suppose I'd written the sort of story that Michael Anstell wanted run in the *Blade*? Where'd I be? Working for one hundred and ten dollars a week. But I'm accurate. I wrote the truth. What am I doing now?"

"Now, that's a question, isn't it?" laughed Jane. "What are you doing now?"

"Well, besides talking to the prettiest girl in the great and glorious Borough of Manhattan ——"

"Oh, come now," said Jane gravely. "Are you quite fair to me?"

"I apologize," said Barnett. "The prettiest girl in the whole darned city and State of New York — besides talking to that girl, I am also the same girl's publicity man, at a salary — oh, I love this accuracy — of exactly four hundred dollars a week. Say, Miss Maynard, I stung the old burglar for twice what I'd dreamed of

getting. Do you think I could have got more from him?"

"What old burglar?" she demanded.

"Michael Anstell," he replied.

"You are publicity man for ——"

"Chief press agent for the Day of Faith! Bring on your autos-da-fé, your martyrdoms. Miss Maynard, I've got religion, I have!"

CHAPTER XXIII

GRAVELY she walked into the assembly hall. She rang a bell and as on yesterday she poured the tea which the colored woman served. All this without a word. But finally she leaned back in her chair. "So you've — got religion, Mr. Barnett?"

"Or religion's got me, Miss Maynard," he chuckled.

"Four hundred dollars a week. What for?" she asked.

"To put you over — right! Miss Maynard, I'm so darned excited ——"

"I suppose it is a lot of money," she said.

He shook his head. "Darn the money! It's the idea. It's too big ——"

"And how do you happen to be selected, Mr. Barnett?" she interrupted.

He grinned. The smile robbed his face completely of that sardonic expression that made it somewhat unpleasant to the casual observer.

"My great abilities, Miss Maynard. Mr. Anstell sent for me to-day. I went. He told me of his conversion." He winked. "He told me — oh, about your meeting last night — everything. Asked me what I'd charge to be chief of publicity. Well, I'm working on a play, but — I said four hundred a week. He took me up. So — here I am."

She eyed him steadily. "Do you think it quite honest to promise to perform work in which you do not believe?"

"Who said that I didn't believe in it?" he countered, "Do you?" she asked.

He met her gaze fairly. "Miss Maynard, when I think of Michael Anstell being converted to any religion — that old wolf — I have to laugh. But in what you preach — I know what it did for me," he finished simply.

"You believe in it — the creed?" she persisted.

"I'm trying to," he said. He colored faintly.

"Then why sneer at Mr. Anstell? Whose money you are ready to accept."

"I'm not sneering; I'm laughing," he protested.

"Why laugh at him? Why would he spend his money — a fortune — on something in which he didn't believe?" she asked.

He shrugged. "Miss Maynard, I thought that you — might be pleased to know that my talents are at your disposal."

"I would be," she retorted, "if I were sure that they were genuinely engaged."

"I never cheat my employer," he told her dryly.

"But yesterday you condemned me because I was willing to let Mr. Anstell back my idea — the Hendricks idea," she corrected herself.

"That was yesterday, Miss Maynard." He hesitated a moment, then went on, "It's not the four hundred dollars a week, Miss Maynard. I — I meant what I told you yesterday. But — I did a lot of thinking last night. I did some more quick thinking when Anstell offered me the position. And — why shouldn't I take it? And why shouldn't Anstell back your idea? If there were any possible way in which he could make use of it — You see, you have no creed, no dogma, no formula. I was darned unjust to the old burglar, Miss Maynard."

"You *were*? You are now, aren't you? You still don't believe in his good faith, do you? You are laugh-

ing at the idea of his wishing to do something decent, aren't you? ”

“Of course I am; I haven't entirely lost my sense of humor,” he grinned. “But yesterday I thought that he could — harm you — in some way. But to-day I don't see how he possibly could. I thought that your idea might be injured in some way. To-day I don't see how. You wonder why, then, I laugh at him. Because, Miss Maynard, I know why Michael Anstell is doing this. Because he believes that his neighbor is perfect? Certainly not. But because he believes that it is easy to hoodwink God. And history. He has a name that has been execrated for a generation, Miss Maynard, a name that is cursed wherever men gather, because of his greed, his selfishness. Michael Anstell knows these things. In his old age a certain vanity has come to him. He wants the applause of the mob that he has scorned, trampled upon. That's why I smile at the idea of his conversion. The wolf is never tamed.”

She stared at him, pondering. Cynical, distrustful of the motives of others, he was. Yet he admitted that he could find no reason for doubting Michael Anstell's sincerity, and if he could find none why should she bother with vague and silly doubts?

“And you will help him?” she asked.

“Not him. The idea. Your idea. If Michael Anstell can ride to a temporary glory on a great idea, shall I scorn the idea? The idea, Miss Maynard, is a lot bigger than Michael Anstell. Besides,” and now his grin was almost wistful. “I'll have a chance to become acquainted with you.”

This was bold, bolder even than his previous impertinences. Yet, somehow, she did not resent it. She had the rare gift of recognizing honesty. She knew that, what-

ever Tom Barnett might be, or might have been, he was honest. And so she replied:

"That is a most flattering remark, Mr. Barnett, and I thank you."

She was engaged to another man, a man who would inherit fabulous millions, billions, even, unless rumor exaggerated too greatly. Barnett was an ex-newspaper man, a press agent, now, with a salary that would not buy the gowns of the wife of John Anstell. He dreamed no silly dreams, as he walked away from the Foundation. He was a level-headed youth. She was not for him; she was promised to another. Yet, to be near her, to see her occasionally. . . . He thought that he would never crave more. We know so little of ourselves.

He went back to his rooms. Forgotten was the play which had been going to make his name and fortune. But there were certain matters that must be wound up. Heaven knew where his new job might send him. He grinned cheerfully as he imagined what those who knew him best would say when they heard of his new work. Tom Barnett fostering a religious movement: to-morrow he was to report to Anstell, begin work. Like so many newspaper men, he'd strayed occasionally into the realms of press agency. The mechanical part of the profession he knew. But this was no mechanical job. This was a scheme, world-wide in its scope; the press would be open to him; colorful yarns suggested themselves.

Yet nothing that he could have imagined would have made quite so colorful a story as a narration of Michael Anstell's movements that afternoon.

Michael Anstell had lost no time in informing the press of his adoption of the Bland Hendricks creed and his intention, by propaganda, to impose it upon the world. He knew that the mere coupling of his name with the Carey Street Foundation would set the wires and cables

humming. And the careful statement that he prepared, backed by the statements of Surmase and the others, would astound the world.

To Judge Galway, who arrived in response to a summons, he gave swift orders.

"Want a State government indorsement of the Day of Faith," he stated.

Galway, frankly puzzled, stared at him.

"What's the idea, Michael?" he asked.

"Too much misery in the world. Mutual faith will dissolve it. Too much worship of queer gods; not enough of our fellow men."

Galway stroked his chin. "I see all that, Michael, but — what's in it, Michael?"

Anstell smiled his wintry smile. "I knew you'd ask it, Judge. All right, I'll answer it: there's nothing in it for me. Good Lord, can't I do a decent thing without you suspecting —"

"Now, Michael, don't be angry," said the judge. "Of course you can, only ——" He paused, alarmed by the Anstell glare. "Just what do you want me to do?" he asked hastily.

"Trouble with government is that it's too damned impersonal, too much machinery, not enough humanity in it," said Anstell. "If the governor should give out an interview indorsing the proposed Day of Faith ——"

"Just what is the Day of Faith?" asked Galway.

"Whole world going to turn out," explained Anstell. "Everywhere — same hour. Repeat that creed — 'My neighbor is perfect.' China, Africa, Asia ——"

"What good'll it do?" demanded Galway.

"Good! Good!" Anstell rose to his feet. "All the good in the world. Make people think. Make 'em think of their neighbor. Can't say a thing like that and be trying to trim your neighbor at the same time, can you?"

Whole world isn't made up of damned hypocrites. You listen to me, Galway. I want the governor to praise the plan. Then I want the legislature to send me an invitation to address both bodies jointly. Can you do it?"

"You know I can, Michael," was the reply.

"Then do it," was the command of the billionaire.

Puzzled, Galway withdrew. Still, after all, there was something to this idea of Michael's. Couldn't do any harm, anyway. Might tend to counteract some of the Red propaganda. Michael was a great man, and this idea of his was a great one. For already the power of wealth was talking. Men were referring to the "Anstell idea."

After Galway's departure Anstell denied himself to other visitors. He busied himself with the telephone. The man with whom he sought conversation was difficult of location, but finally he was brought to a 'phone.

"This is Mizler," he said surlily.

"Michael Anstell talking."

The other grunted in surprise. "Howza boy?" he demanded.

The world would have been amazed to know that any one spoke thus to Michael Anstell. But his face showed no resentment at the familiarity.

"Fine, Sam. And you?"

"Still keepin' out of jail. You're lucky, too, Michael, I notice."

Anstell chuckled. "I'm careful, Sam. Busy?"

"Oh, not so very. Why?"

"Spare me half an hour?" asked the billionaire. His manner of request would still further have amazed the world that knew and feared him. For he put it as a favor.

"Awright. Where?" was the almost reluctant assent.

"Your place'll do," said Anstell. "Be there in half an hour."

Mizler hung up without another word, but Michael Anstell showed no anger at the brusqueness. For, oddly enough, Michael Anstell, who ordered potentates with scant courtesy, treated with respect the man Mizler, and, indeed, exacted no respect in return.

Long years ago, when Michael Anstell had, by certain methods which would never be detailed by any biographer, acquired a certain coal mine in Pennsylvania, he had acquired also certain labor troubles. To parley, to negotiate, meant time; also money. Michael Anstell had never been a waster of either. But it had occurred to him that if he could utterly discredit the leader of the laborers, he would win a cheap victory.

He had won the cheap victory; it had cost him merely the purchase of the man, Samuel Mizler, an under official in the union. Bribed, this man had given perjured testimony that had wrecked the union. Some years later, when Anstell had completely forgotten the incident and the man, Mizler called upon him at his New York office.

Anstell had expected some demand to be made upon him. But Mizler had made none. Grown into a gross saloon keeper, he had waxed fairly rich upon the investment of his bribe. He wanted nothing from Michael Anstell, save merely the gratification of his curiosity.

"I read about you, Michael," he said, "and I get more curious all the time. Sooner or later you'll get your come-uppance, me lad."

"And you'll be glad to see it, eh, Mizler?" Anstell had asked.

Mizler shook his head; he spat contemptuously. "I will not," he said. "Why should I be? I was raised on hokum, Michael. I was told that if I was good I'd be rewarded. I was told that if I done wrong me con-

science would raise hell wit' me. Well, I lived straight until you showed me a bunch of the long green, and I threw down me pals. And I been gettin' fatter and richer ever since. I'm through wit' hokum. But there's such a thing as balance, me lad, balance. I've been through mine. The wife and the kids — aw, well, let be! The good and the bad. They come one at a time, maybe, and sometimes together. But they come. I've had me good and I've had me bad, and, on the whole, I'm not sorry that I took your money. Nay, I'm glad. But balance is what does it. You ain't had your balance yet. I'm wonderin' when."

That was all then. But a few months later Michael Anstell had seen the man on the street. He had descended from his carriage and joined Mizler for a walk. During the years that intervened between that meeting and to-day he had seen Mizler perhaps twice a year. For Mizler had grown, by way of his saloon, into something of a power in ward politics. Unscrupulous, he could be — and was — useful on occasion.

Further, he was shrewd. There had been times when Michael Anstell had taken the judgment of this saloon keeper, on matters regarding the temper of the people, ahead of that of his high-priced lawyers and lobbyists. It was a queer friendship, if such it could be termed. Mizler had no respect for the billionaire. He had no ax to grind. Wherefore Anstell frequently trusted his wisdom.

He found the man in the back room of what had been once a prosperous saloon on the lower West Side and that now was deserted. The glass behind the bar was dusty; there were cobwebs on the soft-drink bottles. Where once had been three bartenders there was now but one, and he a broken, ill-used-seeming old man.

"Can't sell you a thing," said Mizler, as the billionaire entered. "Got some Scotch, though —"

Anstell waved aside the invitation. He sat down on a chair.

"Well, what do you want?" demanded Mizler.

Anstell grinned at him. The attitude of Mizler always pleased him. He met with too much sycophancy. Also, it tickled him that he, the great Michael Anstell, courted by prince and priest, should be, in the eyes of this saloon keeper, an unworthy person. For Anstell had never had scruples, never a tang of conscience to unrest him.

"Seen the afternoon papers?" he asked.

Mizler spat copiously upon the sawdust floor. "Selling tickets for a joy ride to Paradise, eh?" he grinned.

"Want to buy one?" asked Anstell.

"I'll read the ticket first," said Mizler. "The excursion may be the other way."

"Still lack faith in me, do you?" asked Anstell.

Mizler shrugged. "Got any faith in yourself, Michael?"

"I am going to regenerate the world, Mizler," said Anstell solemnly.

Mizler paid the remark, the rare jest, the tribute of a chuckle.

"You doubt me, Mizler?" asked Anstell.

Mizler stared at him. Then he yawned. "Of course I do. I can't make out from the papers just how the graft comes in, but I know it's there, Michael."

Anstell shrugged. "I must expect this, Mizler. It doesn't matter."

"I don't suppose it does," agreed Mizler. "What do you want?" he demanded brusquely.

"The world," said Anstell slowly, "is in a distrustful

mood. It demands proof — and it scrutinizes the proofs that are offered with incredulous eyes.”

“Talk American,” snapped Mizler. “What do you want?”

Anstell colored ever so faintly. “You’ve never double-crossed me, Mizler.”

“I always stay bought,” said the saloon keeper.

“But this is a very delicate matter. My motives might be misconstrued —” He paused.

Mizler laughed harshly. “Not by me, Michael. I’ll *know* they’re crooked.”

From no other man in the world would Michael Anstell have taken this. But Samuel Mizler spoke truly when he said that he stayed bought. His lips were always sealed.

“The world mistrusts me, Mizler,” said Anstell. “It doubts my motives, even when, like now, there is no possible source of profit for me in what I do. I will spend scores of millions for the betterment of the world, and still there will be some doubters. I can’t afford them.”

“Too bad,” mocked Mizler. And again he asked, “What do you want?”

“A new religion, Mizler, needs an auspicious beginning,” said Anstell. “Something that will blazon it before the world —”

“What do you want?” again cried Mizler.

Over Anstell’s lips spread the faintest shadow of a smile. “I want, Mizler,” he said, “about fifteen or twenty first-class ready-made miracles. Can you furnish them?”

“It’ll cost money,” replied Mizler.

CHAPTER XXIV

JOHN ANSTELL arrived at his father's office ten minutes after the departure of the billionaire. They had had an appointment, made last night, and the son had expected that his part in the great plan might be formulated then. But evidently Michael Anstell had forgotten to inform his secretary of the engagement, and it had slipped his mind. Or, and John grinned amiably, perhaps his father had deliberately broken it. Press of more important matters: to a young man in love what difference did it make?

He thought, of course, of calling on Jane and renewing that sweet tête-à-tête that had been discontinued when they parted after luncheon. But she had spoken of her dressmaker, and he knew how exacting dressmakers sometimes are. Jane might be with the woman hours. No, there was no use in going to the Foundation.

But he was restless, a not uncommon condition for a young man in love. To do something, to see somebody: he bethought him of the *Aquitania's* sailing this afternoon. Some friends of his were leaving for Europe. Now that he was downtown, more or less in the neighborhood, with nothing to do, he might as well see them off.

Outside his father's office he hailed a taxi, had himself conveyed to a florist's and a confectioner's, and arrived, burdened with parting gifts, at the dock, fearful that he was, after all, a trifle late. But one of the perennial strikes, that since the war have afflicted all industry, happened to be going on at the moment, had, indeed, been declared that very day, and the sailing was delayed. Men

carrying banners, venting their hatred toward their employers, marched up and down on West Street, with sullen eyes watching the wary and alert police. An harassed dock official held up the taxi, but the name of John Anstell was magic, and he was admitted when he produced a card and a letter — it was from Jane — addressed to him.

On the crowded upper landing he found a steward who was willing, for a consideration, to search for his friends, and when they were finally brought to him he was admitted to the vessel. They were persons, these friends, of financial and social prominence, yet their greeting of him was something less than that of equals. The Anstell name was potent, and they were flattered that one of its wearers should condescend to bid them bon voyage.

He thought of this as he left the ship. He felt suddenly humble, and then suddenly proud. First because he had done nothing himself to justify the laudation bestowed upon him, and second because he was Michael Anstell's son. After all, it was a great thing to wield influence, power. Then he thought of Jane, and his eyes grew less proud and more tender.

Thinking of her, it suddenly became quite impossible to ride. He dropped the hand which he had raised to beckon a taxi. He wanted to walk, to dream of her. And so, upon his lips the faintest smile, he strode up West Street. He turned east shortly and walked through Christopher Street. The day was warm, and he became conscious of being thirsty.

So it was that he paused across the street from Mizler's deserted saloon. He had happened to notice no drug-store; this was the first oasis that had met his eye. And, at the moment, Prohibition didn't bother him. He only wanted water, anyway.

A stream of trucks held him up for a moment, and

while he stood there, watching his chance to dash across the street, he saw his father emerge from the saloon and enter a waiting limousine.

John raised his hand; he called loudly; and it seemed that his voice reached through the shrieks of the motor horns, sounded by impatient drivers. For Michael Anstell hesitated a moment with his foot on the running board of the limousine. John could feel those aged but keen eyes upon him. Then, to his surprise, Michael Anstell stepped into the car, and immediately, the traffic jam ceasing, the machine sped down the street.

It was a queer happening. John was quite sure that not only had his father seen him, but that he had recognized him. Why, then, with his son waving and calling a greeting, had the old man driven away without even a signal of recognition?

He was vaguely hurt, offended. Then he shrugged and laughed. The lean figure of his father was not an uncommon one. Of course, he had been certain that he recognized Michael Anstell's features, but it was possible that he had been mistaken.

It was more than possible, he decided, as he crossed the street, and entered the saloon. What on earth could his father have been doing in such a place as this? Michael Anstell was one of the busiest men in the world. He took no joy-rides in his car. And if he had taken one, he'd hardly have chosen this dingy West Side neighborhood, where driving was impeded by heavy drays and trucks.

And certainly he had no business — that John could imagine — which would bring him into this vicinity. John had been mistaken, that was all there was to it.

The decrepit old bartender served him the glass of spring water that he asked for, and John, leisurely sipping it, looked about him. He wondered at this place

where men had taken their pleasure. For even liquor could hardly have rendered it enticing. Its drab surroundings had not been caused by the Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment; they had always been there. But men had thought it gay.

Gayety, then, was a matter of liquor, in this particular instance. Not even that; for men had come into this place, this dingy depressing resort, and found it inviting before ever they had touched a drop of liquor.

Gayety, then, was a matter of thought. So he idly decided, smiling at his own ponderosity of process. For every one knew that, knew it instinctively, without passing through any recognizable mental exercises to discover it.

But if gayety was mental, why wasn't goodness — or evil for that matter? How could any one, then, quarrel with the Hendricks doctrine? Here, in this drab place, for the first time he began to glimpse the immense possibilities ahead of the campaign for what his father had somewhat fancifully termed The Day of Faith.

Some of those persons whom he had seen on the *Aquitania* had smilingly mentioned the afternoon papers and their headlines. He had thought that he had noticed derision in their smiles, a derision carefully veiled lest the heir to the Anstell millions take offence. But it had been there, and for a moment it had embarrassed him. Now he was ashamed of that embarrassment. It was disloyalty to Jane. It was disloyalty to his father. This latter somehow seemed more important than the other. He was not conscious of the fact, but it was so.

He put down his glass, picked up his change from the counter, and turned to go. As he did so he saw a squat, ugly-featured man standing inside a telephone booth. Through the glass panes of the door he could see the

man's thick lips move, could see the black and broken teeth behind them.

Only a pane of glass prevented him from hearing Mizler's speech, stopped him from hearing words that would have puzzled, then angered him, and then, perhaps, might have caused him to take action that might have changed the history of the world. But how could he know that this man was already intertwined with the campaign for the Day of Faith? Already convinced that his eyes had deceived him, that his father had not been in the neighborhood at all, he left the saloon and continued his walk uptown, his thoughts once again resting tenderly upon Jane.

Behind him, Mizler, having given instructions over the telephone, emerged from the booth, gave certain other orders having to do with the conduct of the resort during his absence, and walked briskly away from his place of business. His telephonic instructions must be followed up by personal commands.

As he walked, he, too, smiled tenderly. For in his pockets were fat rolls of bills. He had told Michael Anstell that the procuring of a score of miracles would cost money. But he did not intend that it should cost more than a small percentage of the small fortune which Michael Anstell had given him. Mizler didn't need money; he was comfortably off, rich in a small way. But why disdain the gifts the gods provided? His smile broadened into a grin; a chuckle came occasionally from his thick lips.

But he was stern and business-like when, at the end of half an hour, he arrived at another saloon, as drab and dingy as his own, on the opposite side of town. Here the Eighteenth Amendment was not observed as strictly as Mizler observed it. In a back room were soiled souls, male and female, who eyed the stranger furtively, almost

menacingly, as he passed through. But Mizler, despite the prosperity of his apparel, wore a truculent-seeming countenance above a sturdy body. Moreover, the waiter who served forbidden liquids seemed to know him, to make way for his passage, and the soiled souls promptly forgot him. He was not game for them and their tricks, as many and as evil as their number.

He went through a swinging door at the far side of the back room and immediately descended a flight of stairs. Confronted by another door, he knocked upon it. Admitted in a moment, he found himself in a cellar-like apartment, lined with benches, above which, ranged along the walls, were bunks like those to be found in the forecastle of a ship. He was in what was possibly the most unique place in New York, a beggars' club.

It bore no name, save possibly the "Hang-out," by which its members referred to it. There were no dues, save a willingness to purchase drink and occasional food from the proprietor of the saloon upstairs. But admission was jealously guarded. Only one known to the habitués as a professional mendicant could become familiar with this apartment. Here were discussed the latest tricks of their ancient trade, the activities of the police and charitable societies; here also the beggars relaxed, swapped yarns and experiences.

Mizler had a strong stomach. Also, he knew that not one in five of the two score persons lounging on the benches or shooting craps on the floor had any real disease or disfigurement. But paint and bandages and crutches carry their own air of suggestion. These, to all appearances, were the hopelessly deformed and crippled, the mutilated.

A man not very unlike Mizler in appearance greeted the visitor warmly.

"I've told them," he said. "There ain't one of them

that won't be healed, fine and dandy like the doctor ordered, at a minute's notice."

Mizler grunted. "It ain't rough stuff," he said. "Nor all at once. I want — to-night — about two; that's all. But good ones."

The other, patently the proprietor of the saloon above, looked around the room. He beckoned to two men, then turned without a word and walked stolidly from the room. At the door he turned and at the end of a hall opened a door and entered a smaller apartment. Mizler followed him, while the two selected beggars came behind. The host closed the door.

Mizler immediately got down to business.

"To-night," he said, "at the Bland Hendricks Foundation, on Carey Street, you guys get cured, see? You go in there — there'll probably be a mob, but you crash in somehow and you get cured. Just by hanging around the dump; get me?"

The taller of the two beggars nodded. "How much?" he asked.

"Twenty-five apiece," said Mizler. "And listen — you blow — quick. Get me? No hanging around for, maybe, some damn doctor to give you the once-over and find you got nothing worse'n dandruff ailin' you. Understand?"

The shorter man nodded. "We get you," he said. "When do we get the dough?"

"You get it to-night, after the trick is pulled," said Mizler. "Jim, here," and he nodded toward the proprietor of the place, "will slip you the kale."

"Fair enough," said the taller. With his companion he walked to the door, and they departed, leaving the other two.

"What's the big idea, Mizler?" asked the man called Jim.

"You seen the afternoon papers?" countered Mizler. "No? Well, there's a big time over this girl Jane Maynard's dump on Carey Street. You've heard of *her*, ain't you? Well," he went on, as the other nodded, "old man Anstell—the big millionaire—is backing her. He wants a little jazz, right at the start. This is the way we get it. Some phony miracles. Those guys'll keep their mouths shut?"

"They're ain't a guy comes into this place a second time," said Jim, "but what I got his number: his Headquarters, Rogues Gallery number. I could slide any one of them up the river wit' a word. Where do I come in?"

Slowly, portentously, Mizler put his right hand in a pocket. He withdrew it slowly, and when it came out it clutched a bundle of bills. He handed them over to the man Jim, who seized them eagerly.

"You can subtract," said Mizler. "You can read your profit there. And just remember this, Jim: You can slide any one of those babies in there up the river. Don't forget I can do the same thing with you."

"Aw, why talk that way?" grumbled the other. "Have I ever double-crossed you?"

"Not yet," said Mizler. "Don't let this be the first time. It'd be damn' unhealthy, Jim. I'll 'phone you later, maybe to-morrow, and give you some more dope on what's to be done."

That was his last word. He rose and stalked solemnly from the room, up the stairs, through the crowded back room and out into the East Side. He chuckled more loudly now. He had bought Anstell his miracles, paid a go-between, and pocketed some thousands for himself. Not a bad day's business.

At nine o'clock that night Mizler rang the bell of Michael Anstell's mansion. The uniformed servant who

answered looked at him disdainfully. Mr. Anstell could see nobody.

"He'll see me," said Mizler truculently. "You tell him Mizler's here. Mizler: got the name? You take it in to him or I'll bust in your pasty face. Got that?"

Now the Anstell home was guarded against cranks; armed men lurked within call of the servant. But the servant didn't raise his voice, for at the moment Anstell himself came downstairs. He paused a moment, and his old eyes flashed anger.

"What do you want?" he asked angrily.

Mizler drew a shaky hand across his forehead. "I wanta talk to you," he said.

His excitement — perhaps it was something more than excitement; it seemed like fear — impressed the billionaire. He nodded reassuringly to the servant.

"This way," he said to Mizler, and led him into a small reception room. "Now, what is it?" he demanded harshly.

"This," said Mizler. From his pocket he drew a bunch of currency. "Take it," he commanded. He thrust it into Anstell's hand and sighed with relief when it had parted from his own. "Sure, it's devil's money," he said.

Anstell frowned. "What do you mean?"

"I mean that I've paid out the balance, but the rest, what I didn't give away, is there," said Mizler. "Keep it."

"Why?" asked Anstell.

Mizler wiped his wet forehead with a handkerchief.

"I'll tell you why, Michael, and for your own good let me words sink in," said Mizler. "I fixed your damn miracles; had 'em all framed. And then, likin' a joke myself, I went, an hour or so ago, to this Foundation on Carey Street. Me men — I'd planted two fake cripples

for to-night — hadn't shown up, but I went inside, to get a ringside seat for the fun. I repeated the rigamarole they make ye say and got in, and — right ahead of me was an old guy, older than me and you, Michael, that I recognized."

He paused, as though for breath.

"Well, what about it?" demanded Anstell.

"It was Lacy Parker — you know him. Him that married when he was over sixty and had the crippled daughter a year later, her that's been crippled for the last ten years, that they've brought doctors from Europe to treat with never a bit of success. Ye mind her?"

Anstell knew; the whole world knew of the marriage of Lacy Parker, the millionaire *bon vivant*, to his chorus-girl sweetheart; the child that had been born to them; the death of the mother; the devotion of the old man to the daughter.

Something seemed to grip Anstell by the heart, to chill him.

"Well, what about it?" he asked.

"There's this about it," cried Mizler. "Ten minutes after I went in I come out. I met me fake cripples on the sidewalk, and I kicked the both of them half a block, the whiles I told them what damn' sacrilegious dogs they were, and then I went to me friend what got them for me, and I called all bets off, and ——"

"Why?" demanded Anstell. Yet he knew the answer before Mizler uttered it.

"Because Lacy Parker's girl is cured, that's why, Michael Anstell," cried Mizler. "Because I'll have no truck wit' what ye wanted me to do. Michael Anstell, don't ye understand? I saw the little girl dancin', singin', while the mob there went wild — Michael Anstell, would ye monkey wit' the powers above ye?"

Anstell smiled. "I told you, Mizler, that I was back

ing this plan. I only wanted the fake miracles to impress the world —— ”

“I heard ye say that to-day,” said Mizler. “But, man, ain’t ye impressed yourself?”

Anstell smiled; it was a most benevolent smile, and it fooled Mizler. “Of course, Mizler. But I knew it all the time. I merely wanted the world to know it.”

“It’ll know it to-morrow,” said Mizler. “Lacy Parker’s daughter! The whole world will marvel.”

But after he had gone, the something that had gripped Anstell’s heart relaxed its hold. Why shouldn’t a miracle be worked? There was the Shrine of St. Anne de Beaupré, Lourdes, the testimonies of the Christian Scientists. Emotional excitement! Mizler, with his talk of powers above, was an ignorant, credulous man.

CHAPTER XXV

THE address of Michael Anstell to the joint session of both houses of the legislature of the State of New York marked an epoch in the affairs of mankind. Great men outside the realm of politics and statecraft had addressed parliamentary bodies before. Ministers of the Gospel who had attained prominence in their profession had done so. But, so far as men could remember, no layman had ever before delivered a religious address to a legislative assembly.

Had Michael Anstell belonged to any particular church, powerful influences, despite his tremendous prominence, would have fought bitterly against the unique event. For churches are as jealous of each other as rival baseball nines, with the difference that rival baseball nines rarely kill each other.

But even those persons who felt that their own particular creed might be threatened by the ascendancy of Michael Anstell's plan kept silent. For the world was dazed. True, miracles had happened before. Men, women and children had been healed, unless thousands deliberately lied, by what seemed the intervention of God.

But there had never, in recent times at any rate, been so spectacular a cure as that of the daughter of Lacy Parker. For this was not like the cure of Tom Barnett; that had been a thing of a minute only, and not too many had believed that it had lasted that long. Indeed, when Michael Anstell publicly announced his backing of Jane Maynard, there were not lacking those who sneered, and

said that he had "planted" the Tom Barnett story in the *Blade*.

But Lacy Parker was not the sort who could be "planted." His financial and social position, his deep and widely known devotion to his crippled daughter, the fact that the best medical attention had failed to heal the girl, these things made the public believe.

Before there had been talk of miracles. But the Parker incident left nothing to speculation: the girl was well, and that was all there was to it. The new creed had proved itself. Let scientists scoff and jeer and talk about emotional reflexes and such matters! Hadn't science, American and European, failed to heal the Parker girl? That was the layman's answer.

But after Michael Anstell's speech to the legislature, the world almost forgot the Parker girl. For Michael Anstell was no fanatic; he was no soft-hearted or soft-minded sentimentalist. He was the greatest financier of all time. And he told the government of New York what a Day of Faith would accomplish.

"It will awaken," he said, "that latent kindliness that is in the heart of every man. It will eradicate hate. It may eradicate nationalism, but to what harm? It is nationalism that causes wars. Patriotism is a great virtue, but a virtue of necessity. If the necessity for patriotism were destroyed, where would be its virtue? Jealousy — how could this live in a world that thought its neighbor perfect?"

"The diplomatic leaders of the world have asked for agreements, contracts with one another. It is as though I asked my neighbor to promise that he would not deceive me. If he is the sort who could deceive, of what avail his written bond to play me fair?"

"The world has dealt as does a physician who deals with symptoms only and makes no effort to attack the

root of the disease. A thousand churches and a thousand creeds! Beneath them all this fundamental thought given to the world by Bland Hendricks, who died in support of his faith. 'My neighbor is perfect.' Why should not these warring creeds meet on the common ground? Let them have their different gods, but let them all recognize that there is but one man, and that man perfect!"

A world listened and read, astounded. But the columnists who would have jeered, the cartoonists who would have scoffed, these received their orders. For the group of men who had allied themselves with Michael Anstell controlled hundreds, thousands of banks. And the banks spoke to the newspaper proprietors. Never, even in those halcyon days before Roosevelt, had big business wielded the power that it wielded now, and big business was beneath the thumb of Michael Anstell and his associates.

For the people must be given something. They had fought a war for peace, and they had laid the foundations of new wars. Industry was shattered all over the world. If men, instead of being set against one another, could be made to extend the fraternal hand. . . . Of course, even a Day of Faith would not bring a millennium. In cold blood, Anstell's associates conceded that. But it would bring about a great awakening of religious feeling, and for once without prejudice toward another's creed, and that was enough for those associates.

But those who dared express to Anstell doubts of the world's complete regeneration were cried down by him.

"I tell you," he said, "the world is ready. The world has been promised Messiahs for centuries. That has been wrong. The world is its own Messiah! The world looks to some one to bring them virtue and happiness. That virtue, that happiness, is in the world; none can bring it

to the world; it is there; the world has only to recognize its presence."

Slightly cracked, some of his closest companions said. But even so: to wake the world, to warm it into religious fervor; what nobler work could man do?

The governor of New York appointed a commission to plan a Day of Faith, and to communicate with other State governments for the purpose of mutual observance of the day. Michael Anstell headed that commission. He spoke a month later to the Congress of the United States, and then the State commission dropped its work, for the Federal Government declared, six months ahead, a national holiday to be known as the Day of Faith.

Quicker than Michael Anstell had dreamed, his vision began to take definite shape. He had underestimated the tremendous influence of his name, his fortune and his power.

For it was Anstell people followed, and not Jane Maynard, although she was in the front of the foreground. And this did not please her. She shrank from too much publicity. She wanted no personal acclaim. Enough for her that a world that only a few months ago had thought her insane, that had put her liberty in jeopardy before a jury of her peers, now cheered her.

For the world was taking the Anstell plan seriously. Michael Anstell knew the value of propaganda. He had watched its workings during the Bloody Years. He had seen how credulous were the people, had learned that the most extravagant untruths, falsehoods that bear their own stamp upon them, blazoned for the seeing to see, are accepted, swallowed whole by a gullible world.

It was a world, too, which worships respectability. This creed was like no other in history. Within a few scant weeks of Jane Maynard's opening of the house on

Carey Street, money, the visible emblem of respectability, was behind it.

It was a creed with its prophet, too, who had died for its sake. It was a creed with its apostle who spread the dead man's doctrine. It satisfied the craving for drama inherent in all human kind. But best of all, it *offended no one!*

This was where the genius of Michael Anstell, a genius that had carried him to the foremost place held in the world by a private citizen, had shone most illuminatingly.

All other creeds that had been born into the world of necessity offended millions. The new creed always said that the old ones were wrong. But this new creed did nothing of that sort. Acceptable to all creeds, how could the proponents of any of them object?

There was another matter, too, that helped, and that Michael Anstell, with uncanny foresight, had known. There were no obligations in the new creed. No troublesome ritual to master, no attendance at church, none of those things which always go with new creeds.

The wonder was not that the world acclaimed the new creed in a few months; the wonder was that Michael Anstell found it necessary to spend any money at all, that acclamation was delayed even a day.

For Anstell spent money as it had never been spent before on the propagation of a new idea. Tom Barnett was the personal publicity man of Anstell and Jane, and also the directing head of all the publicity machinery. His salary was raised the second month to six hundred dollars a week, an undreamed-of stipend for the young newspaper man.

And under him were a score of trained writers, disseminating news of the progress of the Anstell plan. But this expense was nothing.

Anstell sent five hundred trained speakers out through the country; he hired halls for them; he paid for huge advertisements in the papers. For it was not enough that the States and Federal Government should indorse him, he must make the people *want* the Day of Faith.

He made them want it.

To England, to France, to Spain, to Italy, to Germany, to Russia, to all of Europe; to all of South America; to all of Asia; to Africa; to the far islands of the Pacific; to all these places went ships, specially chartered by Michael Anstell. The cables and the wireless heralded the coming of these ships; notables met their passengers when they disembarked. They were the missionaries of the new creed. And where, in savage parts, there were missionaries of the older creeds, these joined with the newcomers to spread the doctrine.

France, shriveling with hate of Germany, surprised the world by being the first to follow the lead of the United States and declare a Day of Faith. It chose the same date as the American Congress had done. England followed. Germany, a pariah among nations, was third, and, while she received scant encouragement, she was not rebuked for her presumption.

Liberia, the black republic of Africa, was fourth. And then it was like a nominating convention falling into line behind a popular candidate. India, not merely the British Government, but the people of India; Russia — the world!

Morality is not a definite thing; right is as changeable as the waves of the sea. Not many years ago a world was horrified, its morality outraged, when it learned that German soldiery had used gas in its attacks. When the war closed it was popularly believed that the United States had just perfected a gas that would outdo any of the horrors that had been attributed to the Germans.

And all looked upon the perfection of this invention as right and honorable. Which it was, for necessity makes morality.

So now, whenever a man lifted his voice to oppose the Anstell plan, men cried him down. He was immoral; the world needed something like the Bland Hendricks creed, and therefore the man who opposed necessity was unrighteous.

"My neighbor is perfect," men were already saying. Yet the man who denied that they abused.

But this was not a disturbing matter, either to Jane or to Michael Anstell. Humanity, he told her, could not be changed in a day. Wait, he advised, until the Day of Faith had come and gone. Then, with the tremendous example of a world crying for light, the impatience of the present new converts would pass.

So she hoped. Yet, during these months, she really found herself less concerned with the momentous event ahead of the world than with her own private affairs.

She loved John Anstell. She knew that. Freely had she given her lips to him; surrendered to his embraces. Yet, at the same time that her lips were pressed against John's, she found herself thinking of Tom Barnett.

For, of necessity, she saw him frequently. Anstell had persuaded her that people are but human beings. Never, in all history, has an idea succeeded without a champion. Men like the man who tells them the obvious. True, they have known the obvious, but they haven't bothered to phrase it, even in their minds.

The Anstell plan, the Hendricks creed, were all very well. Anstell would take the burden of the work, the majority of the publicity, which he professed to disdain and hate. But the public must have its idol, its romantic figure. Jane filled the bill. So, over and over again, she read the story of her life, read of Montreal Sammy's en-

trance into her father's room, and those things which had happened afterwards, which she would fain have forgotten, but read as part of her martyrdom.

For it was a martyrdom. Only because her conscience had ached for what had happened to Bland Hendricks had she opened the Carey Street home. The rest was martyrdom. And yet, not unpleasant, since John Anstell had entered into her life. And even less unpleasant since Tom Barnett's merry life had become mingled with her own. For he was the one who put her before the public. Of course, then, he must know her well.

She wondered that Barnett and John did not seem to care for each other. Of course, John was too well-bred to utter a word in disfavor of the other, and Barnett would hardly have criticised, now, the fiancé of Jane Maynard.

She was too deeply in love with John to note what she would have known at any other stage in her career: that Barnett, too, loved her. Yet, at times, she caught herself thinking of Barnett and colored in resentment at her own disloyalty. For she did not yet dream that Barnett was ever to play any part in her life beyond that of publicity man.

The months went on. Nearer and nearer grew the Day of Faith. John Anstell was frequently absent from New York. In carrying out his father's plan, he made trips to California, made a flying visit to Mexico, where he conferred with the president of that turbulent republic, bringing, as unofficial ambassador, States and nations closer together, helping to arrange that simultaneity of utterance of the Hendricks creed that was part of the great plan.

It was on his return from one of these trips that he went directly from the railroad station to his father's home. His taxi deposited him at the house in the late

evening, and as he crossed the sidewalk, after paying his fare, he saw a man emerge from the house. Under the glare of the door light he recognized him. It was the squat, ugly man whom some months ago he had seen in the telephone booth of the lower West Side saloon where he had drunk a glass of water, and from which he thought he had seen his father make his exit.

He had never mentioned to his father his imagined recognition of him. But now, the greetings after separation accomplished, he said:

“Funny thing, Father. Several months ago I saw you coming out of a saloon — the day I saw the Windsors off on the *Aquitania*. Walked home and was looking for a place to get a drink. Saw you come out and hollered to you, and could have sworn that you recognized me and cut me dead. Then I decided that I’d been mistaken. But just now I saw leaving this house a man whom I saw that day in the saloon. So I did see you, didn’t I?”

Now, Mizler had been paying a call upon Anstell for a perfectly legitimate reason. Since the night that he had returned the bulk of Anstell’s money Mizler had seen nothing of the billionaire. But to-night he had called to ask Anstell’s advice about the negotiation of a loan. The business settled, they had discussed, for a few moments, the Day of Faith, and the saloon keeper had shaken his head gravely. He approved, but he couldn’t figure out how Anstell happened to push the plan. But he’d been civil and had not expressed his doubts.

It would have been very simple for Anstell to have stated that he had been at the saloon on the day in question, but that he had not recognized his son. But he had leaped into his limousine that day in haste, because his conscience was guilty. He had been planning the fake miracles that had never occurred and had not

wished his son to suspect. And so now, quickly, he answered:

“Why, yes, John, a man was calling on me. But — I never was in any saloon on the lower West Side.”

It was a pitiful lie. John had not mentioned the locality of the saloon. He felt almost physically ill. Why should his father lie to him? Why?

If he could have answered that question correctly, then, much unhappiness would have been spared him; he might have won that which was most precious to him now, and would be the more precious when it should have been denied to him. For, later on, pride and prejudice and greed would advance their potent arguments, arguments that he could meet and master to-day, but that to-morrow would seem unanswerable.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE imagination of the world had been gripped. It is easily seized, this imagination of the world, but never by cold facts. The calm, cold logician looks in amazement at a world that rejects his proved statements, that hardly heeds his arguments. He does not understand that man never willingly uses his reason; he prefers to rely on his emotions and those surviving instincts that have come down the ages. Great politicians know this. They never bother to appeal to the mind of the mob; they appeal to its imagination.

Michael Anstell could have been a great politician; he could, had he so chosen, have made people love him, could have been one of those amazing figures of American life the mere mention of whose name brings mad applause. Instead, he had chosen money and the hatred of the mob. But now he had proved that he knew the mob psychology, that he could bend it to his will. For the Day of Faith had dawned.

Of course, not even the genius of a Michael Anstell, nor his lavish expenditure of unheard-of sums, could have brought about this Day of Faith in any other than a war-worn world.

But the old gods had been hurled from their pedestals. The world had gone along for centuries, for hundreds of centuries, carried by yesterday's momentum. Men had been born with new ideas, and these ideas had been tried. New forms of government, wide extension of the suffrage,

the abolishing of evils as soon as they were recognized as such, — the world had indubitably tried to better itself.

Perhaps it had succeeded. But it was hard to convince the mother mourning for her son, the child crying for its father, and the bride looking unavailingly for her husband that the world had bettered itself.

For centuries men had looked backward, with shocked amazement, upon the record of the past. Thankfully they had said that their times were better, that the fiendish cruelty and greed of yesteryear could not exist to-day. And then, suddenly, the storm had always burst, and man had found that man had not changed, save in ingenuity; that his heart still held all the viciousness of the years gone by.

The twentieth century had seemed to promise the fruition of most of the dreams of mankind. Man had conquered the sea and the depths thereof; he had conquered the air and the heights thereof; in all physical ways the lot of a laborer of the twentieth century was more comfortable than the lot of a noble not so many centuries ago.

Disease had yielded to man's study; education was within reach of the humblest; knowledge was no longer locked up in indecipherable tomes for only the elect to gain.

And then had come the Bloody Years. Men stared at the spectacle in horror. Nothing that barbarous man had imagined could compare with the ferocity of the second decade of the twentieth century. Like beasts men acted, and like beasts men thought. No longer was war waged by chosen champions against other champions. It was waged nation against nation, and the quality of mercy was hurled from the heart of man.

It mattered not on whom the guilt for the great debacle rested. The guilty, after all, were men, and men

must share the burden of the blame. The flower of nineteen centuries of Christianity opened, and its petals poisoned and its breath was the breath of death.

And those men of God whose voices should have been raised against the great tragedy cheered on the combatants, and who may find fault with them? They were men first and men of God afterwards. Man looked to God, then turned to his suffering, struggling brother and dismissed God from his thoughts, the while he aided his own blood and tissue.

Men, honorable, gentle, kindly men, faced the issue. Their religion taught them that war was wrong; but against religion was pitted the unanswerable argument: their homes were threatened; dishonor faced their wives; destitution, slavery, menaced their children.

High up to heaven went the cry of mankind. Why had religion failed the world? And only the few knew the answer: because the world had failed religion.

For what profit is there in lip service to an ideal that does not rest within the heart? Religion had come to man as a gentle master, to guide him on the right path, to support him in his hour of tragedy. But man had disdained this master, had bent it to his own uses, and made of it a servant, and the servant failed him in his hour of need.

This was the great tragedy of the Bloody Years: that men were brought face to face with the fact that there was no longer hope. For only the hysterical and the gullible believed that the Bloody Years would see the end of warfare. The sane, the thoughtful, witnessing the tragedy, shuddered more at thought of the future war than of this one which now they endured.

Man had tried reason and he had failed; he had tried force and he had failed. Brain and hand for untold aeons he had used to combat war. And brain and hand had served him ill.

Vaguely, before the Bloody Years had burst upon him, he had talked of ideals, of the growth of righteousness. He knew that there was religion in the world, and he hoped that this religion would save the world when occasion came.

And religion had failed. What, then, was left? Save to prepare for the next war, and preparation inevitably brought that next war nearer. Yet not to prepare hastened it just as much. Were we, then, beasts of the forest, destined inevitably to live as beasts and die as beasts, rending one another to the death? If centuries of study, not merely of science, but of ethics, had brought only the Bloody Years. . . .

Mountebanks toured the world, wearing the livery of religion but preaching the gospel of intolerance. A world that had wearily lifted its bruised head from the battle-field, a world that had seen honor, decency, love, goodness, — all these trampled in the mire of hate, was asked to believe that there was vital wickedness in dancing, in card playing, in the little vices that make misery less miserable.

These were the voices that were raised the loudest and heard the farthest.

Yet these voices had been raised in the centuries past, and men were somewhat wearied of their clamor. Was good so definite a thing that it could be labeled like a can of fruit? Was evil so definite that it, too, could be marked and set upon its shelf? And was there not something almost willfully blind in the attitude of those who thought to censure a world for its pettiness and yet had no remedy to offer for its monumental sins, the sins of the Bloody Years?

With a world prostrate, pleading for help, could religion offer nothing better than the scoldings of a fish-wife? Was that the mission of religion, — to scold, to berate, to find fault like a petulant old crone?

Or was the mission of religion to heal, to uplift? Was not true religion better exemplified by the Red Cross girl who held a cigarette to the dying soldier's lips than by the cantankerous man who denounced the evils of nicotine?

The world had never asked itself these questions before. Individuals had, but the world had not. The world had vaguely believed in religion and never analyzed its own emotions toward it. But now, with the dawning of the Day of Faith, the world asked itself these questions.

It was tired of the charlatan who said that there was but one road to salvation and that was his. For suddenly the world had come to comprehend that while there was only one road to salvation, it had many names marked upon its signposts. The names were different, but the road was the same.

Suddenly men wanted a religion that would help them here, in this world, and not merely promise them rewards in another world. Hope had died in the hearts of men. But drowning men catch at straws. Perhaps, in the creed of Bland Hendricks, in the plan proposed by Michael Anstell, there might be something more than a straw; there might be a raft of substance.

So it dawned, the Day of Faith.

Michael Anstell had known the groping desire, blinded by misery and folly, that still existed in the hearts of men. Hope was dead, but a wish was there. And out of this wish might spring a new hope. But he had underestimated the strength, the passionate virility of this wish. He had thought that awaking the world might be a matter of years; instead, it was a matter of months.

Almost dazed by the accomplishment of his own plan, by the success of this first step in the most monumental scheme ever conceived by a human being, he watched the crowds assemble in the streets of New York. From his high office window he looked down upon the business sec-

tion; like some great eagle he stared down upon the throngs.

It was noon in New York. For to the American city had been given the honor of choosing its own hour, and it had chosen midday.

Midday in New York. In London it was early afternoon. In San Francisco, it was forenoon. In Japan it was dawn. In the heart of China the stars seemed to look down, not coldly, but warmly, upon a rapt and awed multitude. In Africa, in South America, in all the world at the same time, as the chimes of Trinity pealed out the noon hour, the population of the world, drawn from its labor or its slumbers by the magical propaganda of Michael Anstell, lifted its eyes to heaven.

Not all the world entered into the great devotional exercises. There were the lame, and the bedridden, and the aged. There were those, too, who still sneered at the great plan, who laughed at the simple creed, who refused to make fools of themselves, as they termed it. But they were few, even in the barbarous countries. For the Day of Faith was a fashion. Money and propaganda and the wish in the hearts of men had made it so. And there are few who deny conformation to the dictates of good form.

To refuse to take part in the great devotion was to admit that one did not even wish, that one cared naught for the memory of the so-recent Bloody Years. Only Michael Anstell had believed that it could be done, but he had not misread the hearts of men.

Seven million people thronged the streets of greater New York. As Trinity chimed, other churches took up the solemn toll of the hours, telling each neighborhood that the hour of devotion had struck. And, suddenly, gaiety died out of the hearts of the crowd. It had been noisy, shuffling of foot, coughing with embarrassment.

And all over the world, some beneath the sun and some beneath the stars, almost a billion people looked to heaven.

Fashionable Londoner and wan-faced cockney; Indian prince and famine-wrecked Hindoo; high-class Mandarin and Chinese rice farmer; Congo serf and his master; Dyak head-hunter and Christian missionary; the clothed and the naked; the fed and the famished; the strong and the weak. From a billion throats came the mighty cry:

“My neighbor is perfect!”

This was the faith of a broken world. It still had its gods, its creeds, its forms. But above them all, for one moment, it had enshrined the form of man.

“Love thy neighbor as thyself,” the Bible had taught. That injunction, in one phraseology or another, could be found in almost every religion. But the Day of Faith had taken more than this injunction. For the Hendricks creed meant, if it meant anything at all, that one loved his neighbor, not as himself, but better than himself.

“Greater love than this hath no man: that he layeth down his life for his friend.”

This also had the Bible taught, and from this had Hendricks taken his creed. For life is the most precious thing on earth, and if we esteem our neighbor's life as more precious than our own, we must love him more than we do ourselves.

There were millions who had heard the eternal roar of the cannon in the Bloody Years. But this was a greater clamor that assailed the heavens, as though to force them apart and make them disclose the mysteries, ignorance of which had kept man the beast that he had been. Seven million voices in New York; and across the rivers on either side of Manhattan, Long Island and New Jersey added their vocal prayer. And New York State, and New England, the South, the Middle West, — one hundred and ten millions —

Men had prayed in multitudes before, beseeching their gods to spare them from impending peril, from present famine and disease. But this was not a multitude; it was the World.

From its aching heart, from its great despair, from its overwhelming desolation, from its reeking past, from the stench of the present, and from the untold horror of the future, mankind asked deliverance. But it did not ask it of its gods. It asked it of itself.

Its gods had failed it; its creeds, its religions, had mocked it in the day of travail; so now it spoke to the noblest thing man knew of: the heart of man.

In a thousand tongues the prayer was uttered. And even as it was cried aloft, men knew that it was not a prayer; it was a triumphant declaration of belief; it was a challenge to the old gods of hatred, of envy, of malice and greed.

It was a scorn for the past, a defiance of the future, and a greeting of the present. It gave the lie to the old prejudices, the old beliefs that man can be saved only by some aid from without. Man could be saved by himself, and by himself only, and suddenly, inspirationally, man knew that this was so.

Trains speeding across the desert; ships ploughing the oceans; from the cars and from the decks of these came the mighty statement, the statement that tore down the old barriers between man and man.

In the sunshine of Ohio and the blizzard of South America men stood, animated by one common purpose, aroused by one wish.

In his office, Michael Anstell had been pacing to and fro. But as the chimes of Trinity struck his ear, he walked to the window and leaned out. Beneath him was the crowd, weaving, moving, restless, a moment ago, but

now smitten into silence by the notes from the church tower.

Suddenly hats were removed; he had been looking down upon a dark mass that suddenly became white as faces were upturned. And then the great roar of their voices smote him in the face; it seemed as though the immense building shook in the gale that their breath might have created.

Indistinctly the words came up to him, blurred by the million-tongued utterance, but carrying a bell-like note of triumph, as might the voice of the slave when he greeted his freedom. For was not the world free? Had not the shackles been cast off already?

Men knew the answer, and it was affirmative. They had not known that answer one second before the great affirmation had been made. But the heavens had not hurled back the echo of man's challenge to the old gods before the world knew that the great change was here, and the great change must mean freedom.

For suddenly, in the hush that followed the great affirmation, men knew vaguely, yet certainly, what they had done. They had slain the old beliefs; man had conquered his only enemy — man!

Michael Anstell gripped at the window sill; he was shaken by that tremendous fervor that rose from the ground below like some living, tangible thing, that took his shoulders, gripped them, and held him, powerless to resist.

A film seemed to pass over his eyes, but upon its blurry surface were painted vague images that he could not recognize, could not understand.

And then the film passed, and his ears were likewise keen, and he heard a million voices, and they shrieked his name. Out upon a balcony, hundreds of feet above the ground, so high that he was only a speck to those

tiny figures below him, he stepped. He no longer shook, and his eyes were hard.

They roared his name. Was he not the man who had made possible, feasible, this marvelous thing which had happened to mankind, which mankind did not understand, comprehended as vaguely as a child the sustenance which its mother gives it?

Was he not the man whose great love for his fellow man had inspired him, in the face of any obstacle, to persevere in a plan which would bring untold joy to all the world?

He was. And so they hailed him, and cheered him, and blessed him. Up to him came waves of that perfect love which children give to their parents, if so be the parents are kind.

And not only here. All over the world he was being hailed. For instantly, though not clearly, men knew that the Great Change, the Change that generations had dimly hoped for, had come to the heart of man. What would be the material effect of the Change, men had not yet had time to ponder. They only knew that it had come, that they were free from the old gods. This they believed.

Only Michael Anstell, receiving their adulation, knew that they believed in a falsehood.

CHAPTER XXVII

For only a moment, though, did the world render obeisance to Michael Anstell. Since the beginning of time men had been blinded by half-truths. Rarely had honor been given where honor was due. But now, suddenly, men saw the truth. It was not Michael Anstell who had brought about the great change, great and honorable though the world considered the part that he had played.

It was Jane Maynard to whom the world owed this ecstasy which had come to it. She was the pioneer, the Joan of Arc who had heard voices and heeded them. Behind her, of course, was the martyred memory of Bland Hendricks: he first had had the great idea and rendered it articulate. But Jane Maynard had done more than believe in the Hendricks creed; she had preached it to the world. Always, until to-day, men had placed money above the things of the heart, but to-day men placed the things of the heart first.

And so suddenly the name of Jane Maynard was cried aloud. Not merely by the throngs gathered in downtown New York, but by the throngs gathered all over the world. If it had been love that had been rendered, in that first ecstatic moment, to Michael Anstell, it was adoration that flowed forth to the girl.

In front of the Foundation on Carey Street, with Tom Barnett and John Anstell, Jane Maynard had uttered the great affirmation. Carey Street, from wall to wall, was one solid mass of people. These were the poor, these were the people who knew, from first hand, the gentle kindness of Jane Maynard and had learned to love her

for herself, not for the idea which she had promulgated.

These, too, like all the others, first cried the name of Michael Anstell. Then came reaction from the tribute men always pay to power and place; they paid their tribute now to something greater than the temporal power of man; they paid it to the eternal power of the spirit.

Nothing like this had Jane expected. Indeed, had she been asked, on the morning of the Day of Faith, exactly what she had expected, she could not have answered coherently. She had made no careful analysis of world conditions, as had Michael Anstell. She had not studied the temper of the world, placed a canny finger upon its pulse, as had Anstell. She knew, instinctively, that man potentially was good; that was enough for her.

She had come to believe in the Hendricks creed. She did not analyze it; had not asked what would be the effect if all the world believed; the thing was too tremendous, too terrific. She let Anstell and others use the word "millennium" in her hearing without asking what they meant. She had no more idea than any one else in the world what a millennium would mean.

For centuries men had talked of the millennium, but when asked to express a concrete idea of it, they had failed. No more than one could comprehend eternity, or limitless space, could one comprehend universal goodness.

But now the world knew that a millennium had come to it. It did not comprehend how or why. For the world, in the moments following the great affirmation, was like a sleeper that has just awakened, too dazed to know whether or not it still wandered in the land of unreality.

Soon the world would begin to think, to understand; the amazing evidence would flow in from all quarters of the world, evidence that would stagger humanity, would make its burden of joy almost too poignant to be borne. But now it did no thinking; it asked no evidence, no proof of

the effect of a new idea in the world. It was like a child that on Christmas morning has just glimpsed the tree with sleep-blurred eyes. The child knows that all entrancing things are hanging from the tinsel boughs, but in the first gasp of anticipatory delight it asks no questions, postpones its investigations.

Before the mighty blast of triumphant applause, that almost wordless vocal wave of affection, Jane turned pale. Never, at any time, had she desired publicity, place. To be liked, even loved, that was wonderful. But to be a person set apart, for that she did not care. She had undergone the publicity of the past months because men whom she considered wiser than herself had thought it necessary. But she had thought that when the Day of Faith had arrived, men would dismiss her from their minds, that the Hendricks creed would hold their thoughts, perhaps. Certainly that Jane Maynard would hold their attention was not in her mind.

It almost frightened her, this cry from the mob. What had she done to deserve it? The past came swiftly through her mind. And suddenly remorse for the fate of Bland Hendricks left her. She realized that something had happened to the world, something of great potential good. Had it not been for the martyrdom of Hendricks, that something might never have come about. Perhaps she was just some part of the plan of a Power far above the power of men.

She was sane. To carry forever in her mind, in her heart, the bitter memory of Bland Hendricks' tragic end would have made her insane. Indeed, her mind had failed her, until she had begun to adopt the Hendricks creed. Men die to set each other free. She could no longer feel regretful for the death of a man whose dying had brought about so glorious a thing. Not that she could ever justify her action on the night when the mob had surged

across Hendricks' lawn. But somehow a weight seemed lifted from her; in a measure, so far as she could, she had paid — she hoped she had.

The mob seemed to move toward her. She was not frightened, and yet she wished to be away from them, to think. Through those who had been standing between her and the door to the Foundation, Tom Barnett and John Anstell forced a way.

Men and women caught at her clothing; to touch her seemed the wish of the thousands; sobs that were strangely triumphant sounded upon her ears. She passed through the door and in a moment it closed behind her.

In the hall the two young men and the girl stared at each other.

"You've put it over," said Barnett. His voice was husky, and his eyes glittered with excitement. "The greatest thing in the world's history — and you put it over."

He took her hand in his, forgetful, it seemed, of the presence of John Anstell, her fiancé. He lifted her hand to his lips and kissed it. Then he stepped back and stared at her; for the first time Jane fully realized that he loved her, that his love was a tremendous thing, as great as that which John Anstell bore her, and the more impressive, perhaps, because he seemed to understand that it was hopeless, because he asked nothing for himself, wished only to give.

She colored faintly.

"The world has put it over — not I," she said.

"It doesn't matter," said young Anstell. "It's done." He, too, took Jane's hand, and Barnett turned away.

The thoughts of a billion people were now concentrated on Jane; she seemed to feel the waves of a world's mentality beating upon her. Suddenly she was exhausted. The color left her cheeks, even her lips. She seemed to

sway slightly, and with a cry John put his arm about her. But she managed to smile.

"I'm just — worn out," she muttered. "To be alone. . . ."

Yet from the stairway she smiled and waved them a brave hand. They both stood staring after her until she turned at the top of the stairs and was gone from their sight.

Her limbs felt suddenly leaden as she passed from their vision. To have held an idea for months, to have concentrated one's thoughts on one thing alone, and to have given not merely one's mentality, but one's heart: this is the exhausting thing. Upon her knees by the bed in her room she fell. She uttered no conscious prayer, yet from her overflowing heart came murmurs. A great wave of happiness engulfed her. It was, at the moment, engulfing all the world. It was the third, the final battle, in the conquest of the world.

Outside, on Carey Street, the two men looked at the mob. It seemed, this street, like some holiday crowd, making merry. The faces of children were on the shoulders of men. A peace, a gentleness that passed comprehension, seemed to hold the people. One little thing Tom Barnett noticed as he stood on the stoop: a huckster from his cart was giving fruit to children. It meant little, perhaps, and yet, equally perhaps, it meant much.

They parted at the foot of the stoop, parted with warm handclasps. Young Anstell had read Barnett's secret. Yesterday he might have been jealous; to-day he was only sorry that unhappiness might visit the publicity man.

For himself, he dreamed, as he pushed his way through the friendly throng, of the day, now almost at hand, when Jane should be his. She had belonged to the great idea,

to the world, for the past months, but now she should belong to him.

He reached downtown Broadway; here the mob, with none of that rough playfulness that characterizes the usual mob, seemed aimlessly walking up and down, with no apparent purpose, yet rapt of expression. Suddenly a roar began farther downtown; it came uptown; the ecstatic cheering of a world gone mad with joy.

For Michael Anstell had left his office and entered his limousine on his way to his home. The mob had cheered him once, then rendered tribute to Jane. Now, seeing the backer of the great plan at close range, it cheered him again.

Slowly, impeded by the throng that did him honor, the big car moved uptown. Like the progress of an emperor, like the progress through the streets of Europe of that American who, at the end of the Bloody Years, had preached a message to the world, was the progress of Michael Anstell.

For a moment to-day he had been definitely first in the hearts of the world. Now he was second, would never be first again. But that second place was so infinitely higher than ever man had held before that Michael Anstell need not have been jealous of Jane Maynard.

John, wedged against a wall by the cheering multitude, saw his father pass. He felt a thrill of pride. The world had hated this man, his father, in the days gone by. To-day it recognized his greatness, his goodness. He could not hail his father, but he left Broadway and walked uptown on a less frequented street, where progress was not so slow. He wanted to talk to his father, to congratulate him on his great, his miraculous achievement. To make a whole world affirm its love, its trust, its faith in its fellow man. In the mind of John Anstell it was

not Jane Maynard who had made to-day possible; it was Michael Anstell.

Tight-lipped, grave of visage, yet in his eyes a gleam of triumph, Michael Anstell made his glorious way to his Madison Avenue mansion. Through the milling thousands — who, oddly enough, never crushed each other in their rapid movement — he made his way. He received an ovation, as he entered his home, such as no man in history had ever received before, that had been exceeded, in all time, only by the ovation that had been given Jane Maynard on Carey Street. He held the proudest position ever attained by a man. For he was higher in the hearts of the world than any ruler had ever been; than any leader of a creed. Second only to Jane Maynard. He recognized this; he had noted the difference between the way in which his name was cried and that of Jane Maynard. He was human; she, to the world, was something angelic.

But he had dreamed a dream; the most tremendous dream that had ever entered the mind of man, and Jane Maynard's place in the world meant nothing to him. The world might place Jane Maynard first, but Michael Anstell cared nothing for the name; the game alone interested him.

And he had won his game; vision and courage had not deceived or failed him. The greatest game, the greatest stake for which man had ever gambled a fortune! What were the paltry millions that he had spent? Nothing! He had read the heart of the world and read it aright.

Yet the gleam in his eyes was not the gleam in the eyes of the rest of the world. So might the eyes of Satan have gleamed when the angels fell. . . .

In his great library he found Surmase, Heilbrun, Elbertson, Kynaston and Blodgett, those men who had joined so willingly, at his behest, in the backing of the great plan. They were in that exalted state in which

statesmen are found when news has come of a great military victory.

Dramatically, Anstell paused in the doorway. Surmase lifted his heavy voice. He was a hard-bitten citizen, was Surmase. Yet he had backed the great plan. At first he had entered into the plan because he had thought the world needed something like this. Later he had remained in it because he had come to believe.

"Michael," he said, "you have conquered the world."

Into Anstell's eyes came back the gleam that had been there the past hours, that he had put from them as he faced these friends and fellow workers.

"Not I, Surmase," he replied. "The world has conquered itself."

Surmase seemed suddenly to yield to weakness; he collapsed in a chair.

"Do you realize what's happened, Michael?" he asked.

"Does any one?" demanded Anstell.

"Not yet," said Heilburn excitedly, "but — we're beginning to! Anstell, this is the end of war, the end of greed, the end of hate —"

"If it lasts," said Anstell.

He could have bitten his tongue the moment the speech was uttered. For the others stared at him as though shocked.

"I mean," he said, "that we must hold to the creed."

"Of course," said Kynaston carelessly. "As if," and he laughed, "the world will give up anything like this, once it has known it."

He, too, sat down, passing his hand across his forehead. But his lips were curled in a gentle smile.

It was all right for the multitude, the ignorant, but these men, — these were his fellows in the world of power and dominion. Anstell again felt something clutch at his

heart, but it was not a frightening, an awe-inspiring grip such as had come to him in his office building. This was the purest joy.

He got rid of them; he had to, or shriek in their faces. For he must be alone, alone to gloat. He had guessed correctly the tired spirit of the world. But men like Surmase and Kynaston and the others! It was too unbelievable! In their minds he had expected to find doubt, cynicism. The whole world had gone mad, insane! He had expected the people, the great bulk of them, to be gulled, as always they had been gulled. But to find the great leaders of business and finance in the same ecstatic mood as the common herd. . . .

Alone, in his study, looking down at the backwash of the crowd that passed by his home to look at it as though it were a shrine, Michael Anstell faced the facts.

A billion voices had been raised to Heaven, had uttered the same speech, professed the same great faith. And the very roar of those voices, the very effect of the concentrated thought of the billion, had staggered the world. It had done more than that; it had hypnotized the world.

Michael Anstell saw that. And seeing, his joy became tempered with caution. He had expected to find a world changed; but a world transformed was beyond his expectations. He had expected much, but had achieved all!

One thought had sent men to war; one thought was sending men to peace now. One thought had made men hate; one thought now made them love.

If it were true; if it should last.—Why not? He had expected not this, but something akin to it. His faith had never failed; he had read his destiny months ago, when the great scheme had leaped into his mind. Should he doubt his own triumph now?

He walked to the window and looked at the crowd. Slowly his lips curled in a sneer.

The fools! The blind idiots! To think their neighbors perfect! Laughter that was almost hysterical burst from his lips. If Surmase and Kynaston and Blodgett believed; if these hard-headed men had been engulfed in the wave of auto-hypnosis that had swept over the world, — why then, *every one* must believe. That is, every one save Michael Anstell.

The only man in the world who possessed his common sense! A sane, shrewd, calculating man, in the midst of a billion mentally stupefied half-wits. Idiots who thought that anything counted save a man's possessions. Fools, dolts, maniacs!

And yet, while he characterized them thus, strange things were happening in the world. Men had uttered the great affirmation. And a moment later even those who had not believed accepted it as fact. So mighty was the power of the mind. For if one mind may influence one other mind, what may a million minds do? And here were a billion minds that had uttered the great affirmation.

Hypnosis or faith? The semblance of truth, or the truth itself? What did it matter? The world had been reborn, and a thousand miracles, real miracles, miracles of man's faith in man, were happening all over the world.

And only Michael Anstell knew that the miracles were not real. The world stood on the heavens, but Michael Anstell stood in hell. The truth of a billion was pitted against the falsehood of one, and who yet has gauged the power of a lie?

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE conquest of the world!

Surmase had told Michael Anstell that he had conquered the world. Anstell had replied that the world had conquered itself. Each had spoken in the hyperbole that excitement induced. Each knew, with all the world, that *something* had happened, but it was not until next morning that they, or the rest of the world, understood the extent of the happening.

Indeed, even then, the amazing nature of the events that had occurred could not be comprehended in a moment. Even Michael Anstell, alert, keen, incredulous, animated by a motive that had been born in contempt and nurtured in greed, could hardly believe that his great plan had come to this tremendous fruition.

For the world was not changed; it was remade!

For centuries men had been speculating on the relation between mind and matter. A great church had sprung into being, and millions clung to its tenets, and its tenets maintained that mind ruled matter.

But not merely emotionally, not merely spiritually, had men speculated. Science, cold and exacting, had been striving to establish the exact relation between mind and matter. Cunning machines, which could measure emotions by their physical results, had been invented. The time was not far distant, men claimed, when the guilt or innocence of a criminal would be established by machinery.

The sorcery of yesterday was the commonplace of to-day. Fakers and charlatans traveled the entertainment

houses of the world, mystifying their audiences by exhibitions of the apparently supernatural. Tricksters, yes!

But a world had nevertheless come to know that whether or not mind could affect matter, it surely could affect another mind. And that minds could be affected in the mass, not merely in the individual, had been proved during the Bloody Years, when whole communities had caught certain fervors and been lost to reason.

Not that this was anything new. The Crusades had taught certain lessons concerning mass humanity; before them they had been taught, learned — and forgotten.

History presented an endless succession of men who had imposed their wills upon peoples, until their followers forgot the imposition, so whole-heartedly did they adopt the idea handed to them.

When one single man, upon a platform, professed to impose his mind upon the mind of the subject seated supinely before him, men called it hypnotism. And so much fraud existed in these demonstrations that few believed at all in their occasional sincerity.

But when one man carefully and shrewdly deflected the minds of many along a certain channel, men had not called it hypnotism. Nor was it, as hypnosis is generally understood. But that it sometimes was an auto-hypnosis, a self-deception, scientists had begun to understand. Too many thousands of authentic cases, of sane communities gone mad, existed to permit of doubt of this thing called self-hypnosis.

And what we call facts are arrived at only by a process of mass-hypnosis. Centuries ago it was a fact that the earth stood still and the sun revolved around it. To-day it is a fact that the earth revolves around the sun. Scientists have disproved the old fact and proved the new one. Yet, in those older centuries, scientists had amply demonstrated the old fact. Is it not possible that

some scientist yet unborn will deny, with irrefutable proofs, the facts that we accept to-day?

Let, then, enough people believe in a certain thing, and it becomes fact. It matters not that past or future may deny it. To-day it is a fact.

For untold thousands of years man had accepted, as fact, the venality of man. The Bible, accepted in one form or another by practically all the white world, insists upon man's venality. It teaches that for his sins man was hurled from Eden.

Other creeds teach the same thing; sin is inherent in man; it may be conquered, but it is a living fact.

This was the Great Fact, to the demolishment of which the Day of Faith had bent itself. And the Great Fact, that had endured the preachments, the hopes, the prayers of thousands of centuries, suddenly crumbled into nothingness, to be replaced by the Greater Fact, — that man was good.

Auto-hypnosis! But what did it matter that Michael Anstell knew it to be this? The world believed differently.

In the centuries past, on many occasions, multitudes had prayed. They had prayed for relief from pestilence, from famine, from wars. Never had a multitude assembled in a devotion which *asked nothing*.

This was the fashion in which the devotion of the Day of Faith differed from all other devotions. *Men asked nothing*. And because they asked nothing, they received all!

All! For the gates of hate were released and the pent-up poison of a million years vanished! Hate! The only barrier that separated man from complete happiness, and it was gone!

For facts are what men believe to be facts, and a hypnotized world had decided, convinced by the billion voices that had been raised to heaven, that its neighbor

was perfect! Men believed, and believing wrought in miracles.

Not the cheap, tawdry miracles that had marked the progress of the world toward its Day of Faith. To heal an ailing body was, after all, but the legerdmain of a conjurer. As proof of greater powers, such things were well enough; but in the sudden knowledge of possession of those greater powers men did not stop to ask the physical miracles that had been so marvelous but yesterday.

For these were the greater miracles; these were the healings of the mind, of the heart, before which no diseases of the body could stand, or, standing, were rendered nothing.

For the heart of man was healed! His mind was drained of the poisons of a million years of falsehood. Man was not evil; he was good. He had been so declared by his neighbor, and before that great affirmation no falsehood, however hoary with antiquity, however backed by the belief of a thousand generations, could stand.

The world observed its million local miracles, marveling. But, because it was human, it marveled more at the news brought to it by the wires, distributed by the press. The thing that yesterday would have been a neighborhood miracle became a commonplace. It took great things to thrill the world, to make it understand, definitely, what had come to it.

And these great tidings were poured out.

Two armies, held in leash for a propitious moment, had swung into action at last. These, yielding to orders from their respective governments, had observed the Day of Faith. On the eve of bloody battle they had uttered the Great Affirmation.

Because their governments had wished to profess faith with the rest of the world, hundreds of thousands of

armed men had joined in the utterance of the Bland Hendricks creed.

Then — they had lain down their arms!

Correspondents, prepared to see slaughter, saw fraternity, and hastened to appraise the world.

This was the first of the great miracles. Armed men, trained to bloodshed, defending, each body believed in all sincerity, its hearth and loved ones, laid down their arms. For they believed, and believing, how could they slay? The careful arguments of their press, their government, their orators, were forgotten. Those arguments had been believed as implicitly as though they had been Holy Writ, but newer and greater truths suddenly superseded them.

“My Neighbor Is Perfect.”

One man alone could say that — and sneer. A million could have said it — and jeered. But a billion had uttered it and conquered its own disbelief.

Peace! Not to-morrow, not next year. But to-day! This is what the Great Affirmation had meant. Men could hold no anger, no hatred, toward men who could contain no evil. Fantastic, incredible, yet fact!

This, in the eyes of the unthinking, ranked as first of the miracles. Because the peace of the world had suddenly, despite the Anstell campaign, begun to tremble in the balance. Had these two armies locked, the rest of the world might have been imperiled.

But the thinking knew that other matters were greater. And the greatest was the overthrow of the Law.

The law was the most precious thing known to man, because on it rested his whole security. Without the protection of the law, the assurance it gave to him, he would have instantly relapsed to barbarism. Painfully, hardly, he had evolved the complicated system whereby the social order was maintained.

For the law recognized what few men did: that right and wrong were so interchangeable that it took men of learning, of great mentality, to decide which was which.

And now this tremendous system, for the creation of which untold millions had given their lives, utterly and completely broke down. For the law, like most of religion, had its foundation in economic things. Man decided upon what constituted the greatest good to the greatest number and called it law. Soon, because the majority approved of these matters, they drifted away from lay temples into those of religion. Instead of being matters solely economic, they became matters also moral.

Nevertheless, upon law far more than upon religion, man had placed his dependence. Without the law there could be no security. This was the most powerful belief in all the world. And the Day of Faith had demolished it at one blow.

For, by the morrow of that Day, men knew that there was no law in the world, save the law implied in the Great Affirmation. Law was made to prevent men from doing harm. It held no application for a world of men who were perfect.

Jails! These were the first to cease their usefulness. And Sing Sing, where Montreal Sammy was confined, was the first to demonstrate to a new and joyous world that prisons had ceased to be.

The inmates of Sing Sing had been given a holiday, in order that they, too, might celebrate the Day of Faith. Drawn up in the great yard, in military array, led by a chaplain, they had voiced the Great Affirmation. Theirs had been the bitterest of the sneers that had been raised against the Day of Faith. For what could such a day mean to them? Nothing, they thought.

Indeed, it was not until the next morning, when a night of dreaming had fixed more firmly the new idea in the

minds of the world, that the underworld, that portion of it undergoing punishments for its violations of the social code, awoke to realization of the new order.

Montreal Sammy had been utterly and absolutely convinced that Jane Maynard would keep her word, that she would set him free. He had made no further effort to escape; had, indeed, resigned to his fate, and deeming that fate only temporary, become a model prisoner. He had undergone the punishment meted out to him for breaking jail with a patience that had amazed his warders, had made them believe that here was a genuinely reformed criminal.

For the first time in his suspicious life Montreal Sammy had had faith in the sincerity of a fellow human. So he had received Yegg Darby without animosity. It didn't matter, this treachery of Darby's. Sooner or later Montreal Sammy would have been caught, would have had to pay the price of his criminality. That he had been brought early to book, through the instrumentality of Darby, didn't matter. Because Jane Maynard had promised to set him free.

She'd do it. How, Montreal Sammy didn't know—or care. He supposed that through some circuitous method she would inveigle the governor into granting a pardon. He didn't worry about the method. Results alone counted with Montreal Sammy, and he knew, somehow, that Jane would not fail of results.

That she had sent him no word during these recent months, that, apparently, he was as permanently immured as any of the other "lifers" in the prison, didn't frighten him. He supposed that Jane had forgotten him. She had, in the press of other things, but not permanently. She had made many statements in recent times, all of which had been made sincerely, yet seemed, somehow, to

have been prompted by something without herself: the Hendricks creed, for example.

But it was Montreal Sammy himself who reminded her, with his own voice, not through the intermediary of any messenger, of her promise to release him and of the keeping of her promise.

For on the morning following the Day of Faith, the doors of Sing Sing were thrown wide. The law, the great system of jurisprudence on which mankind depended, had given way to the greater system that Jane Maynard had put before the world.

Men were perfect. This was no lip utterance; it was a suddenly recognized truth, a fact. A fact as compelling as yesterday's fact that men were evil. How could prison walls endure before that fact? Suddenly prisons became absurd, ridiculous things.

It takes no legislative act to change a fashion. Fads are born in the night and die in the morning. On one day a woman would rather die than expose, on the Avenue, the calf of her leg. Another day arrives and she would die rather than hide the same part of her anatomy. It is immoral to show the limb to-day; it is almost vulgar not to show it to-morrow; and by the day after it may again be immoral.

So it had been a fashion, for centuries, to confine criminals. Great changes are made just as swiftly as minor ones. Here was, in the light of the new fact that had come to the world's consciousness, a crying and damnable wrong. Before the Day of Faith men had not esteemed the jailer. To-day he could not esteem himself.

A new thought had come to all men, whether they were jailers or jailed. And in the light of that thought, in its clarifying brilliance, falsehood could not endure. These were men, these prisoners confined within the walls of Sing Sing. How differentiate them from their more fortunate

fellow men? It could not be done. Man could not say that his neighbor was perfect and then withdraw the statement because of the past. A clean slate, a new slate, with no ribald markings upon its virginal surface!

The law not merely broke down; it vanished. There was no formality to its departure. The prisoners were simply informed that they were free.

How could they be imprisoned? They had sinned because their minds were not attuned to the accepted chord. But a new chord had been struck, and to that chord the hearts of all men, regardless of yesterday, were attuned.

Free! By the simple act of their jailers stepping aside. No fear of the consequences restrained these jailers from their action. They could not do otherwise. For mankind does what he thinks he must. For all past time men had acted in certain ways because they thought they must. Now, they acted in an entirely different way, because the thing newly come into their hearts ordered them to do so. They obeyed.

Free! Not merely in Sing Sing, but in all the prisons of the world. And in those places worse than prison, where people were confined because their minds had been afflicted. These, too, were healed by the same great truth, the same universally accepted fact! For an hypnosis that will conquer the strong must necessarily conquer the infirm.

Not the great armies laying down their arms, but the mind of man putting aside its base superstition—this was the miracle. Not the halt walking, but the feeble of mind seeing clearly: this was the miracle.

Not even Anstell had foreseen these things. How could any man foresee them? For man had lived so long, traveling the same path, accepting the same idea, changed each year to conform to his greater growth, that he could foresee no other road. Man believed in laws and deemed

them, despite the yearly changes, immutable. The greatest law that he had observed was the natural law of man's innate viciousness. That he had considered unchangeable.

Now, suddenly, that law had been demolished. This, the greatest of laws, dragged into oblivion with it all his other laws. The world was turned upside down.

Free, because perfect men could not punish other perfect beings. A thing that yesterday would have brought a smile to the lips of the most devout and kindly man, but that to-day, new laws governing, was as sane as yesterday it would have been insane.

A world that knew no restraint save that imposed by man's charitable opinion of man: a world gone crazy — with the truth. A world—at last—in which the lion lay down with the lamb.

CHAPTER XXIX

DAZED, wondering, some of them, what sort of trick their sudden and informal release portended, the inmates of Sing Sing entered the motor-busses that were to take them to the train. For here, within these grim walls, had been offered the strongest resistance to the new idea. They uttered the Great Affirmation, but few indeed were those who had believed.

But one who emerges from a dark room into the sunlight is blinded. So with these men. From the dark room of prison, where there is no hope, they entered into a blinding sunshine. And the old beliefs fell away from them, as they had fallen away from the rest of the world.

Montreal Sammy, leaving the Grand Central Station, no longer sought the mean byways. For the first time in many years he dared walk down Fifth Avenue.

And what an Avenue! Even those discourtesies of the past were gone. Here were crowds considerate of their neighbor. Policemen remained as traffic warders, but for that purpose only. Although Montreal Sammy didn't know it at the moment, anarchy practically reigned in the city, in the State, in the nation, in the world.

For policemen and detectives had reported for duty this morning to become suddenly conscious of the absurdity of their life-work. The Commissioner had issued a proclamation early in the forenoon. It was to the effect that since there was no more criminality in the world, criminal catchers were anachronistic. The police would be retained, as many as were needed for the purposes of acting as guides to strangers, regulating traffic, and such

other matters as might arise, but the great majority would be permitted to depart and enter more congenial occupations.

Grand juries and petty juries had ceased to function. Judges, prosecuting attorneys — all these began to mark time. For all knew in their hearts that to continue in their present ways was impossible. The great profession of the law realized, in a body, that its usefulness was practically ended. Legislators understood that their functions would be greatly curtained. Makers of munitions, soldiers, fighting sailors — these, too, understood what the great change meant to them.

Yet there was no panic. Men understood that even though the careers toward which they had bent all their energies were no longer possible, there would be other careers.

Disarmament, a state toward which gentle souls had tried to guide a reluctant world, was practically an accomplished fact.

Anarchy, not the riotous, murderous thing that most persons understood by the word, but that anarchy which simply consists in no regulation of the individual or the mass save that inspired by his own goodness, a state impossible in a world not populated by perfect people, was not merely possible; it had arrived!

Gentle souls had over the centuries preached this friendly anarchy, and men had scoffed at them, jeered at them; the same men who had professed belief in the preachings of the Founder of Christianity, proving always that they had considered Him a visionary, an impractical dreamer.

But His Day had come! Men knew, at last, that He had been no fanatic, but a sane, hard-headed preacher of the Truth. Men marveled now that for more than nineteen centuries they had done Him lip service only.

A chaotic world, but a happy one. A world no longer bound by formula, but a world that, casting formula aside, had achieved the Great Result.

Manhood came back to Montreal Sammy as he walked down Fifth Avenue. He completely forgot the existence of plain-clothes men. Indeed, their camera eyes were no longer trained on him, seeking the viciousness that might be hidden under the disguise of decency. There were no more disguises, because there was no viciousness.

At Madison Square he paused. Prompted by nothing but their own grateful impulses, a great throng had assembled in the Garden and overflowed into the park outside. They were conducting no services, but occasionally cheers burst from their throats. Children sing and dance in the exuberance of their health; men sang, even danced, in the exuberance of their spiritual health.

It was holiday! Even those who worked to-day attacked their labors with a different spirit. Work, after all, was joy. Michael Anstell had not guessed all this. He had expected a malleable world; it was a world of putty.

In the Foundation on Carey Street, Montreal Sammy found Jane. She had awakened from sleep refreshed despite her dreams. For they had been lovely dreams.

"You got me out, Miss Maynard," said Montreal Sammy.

She smiled at him. "I'm afraid that I'd almost forgotten you."

He shook his head. "You was workin' at big things, and I was part of them, Miss Maynard."

She smiled again. "You made me realize what the big thing was."

Montreal Sammy had not realized before that his part, while unadmirable, had been great in the Day of Faith.

Now he did realize, and a humility that had never been in him before rose to the surface.

"I guess, Miss Maynard, that we all helped — somehow, didn't we?"

"Unless," she answered, "all the world had wanted it, it could never have come."

That was the great basis on which the Day of Faith had been founded. For even those who had sneered had, down underneath them, that saving decency which had made them, perhaps unknown to themselves, desire goodness. Save one! But Jane did not know the purpose of Michael Anstell.

John Anstell entered the Foundation while Jane talked with Montreal Sammy,— entered, indeed, as Jane was offering Sammy money. But the ex-convict refused.

He was a man, by the grace of the mysterious yet sublimely simple thing that had happened to the world. The world would treat him kindly; there was work for him and reward for the work. He needed no aid, would not accept any.

Smilingly, proud of him, as all the world, amazingly, was proud of its neighbor, they watched him go. John seized Jane's hands.

"Jane, we won't wait any longer, will we?"

She shook her head and gave him her lips.

"To-day?" he asked.

She blushed. "Not *that* soon, John."

"To-morrow?" he asked eagerly.

"Next month — perhaps," she told him.

With that he forced himself to be content and left her, bound for his father's office. He walked on feet of air, and those whom he passed seemed to have a new and strange resiliency of footfall. A benign madness was in the eyes of all; it was in his own; it had settled down upon the world. At least, yesterday it would have been called

madness. But to-day it was sanity, the only true sanity that a warring world had known in all its existence.

He found his father, strangely nervous for that self-controlled person, in his office. Before him were telegrams and cables and wireless reports from all over the world. He leaped feverishly to his feet and gripped his son's hands in his own.

"It's worked, boy," he cried.

"Indeed it has, Father," was the young man's answer. "And you—did you guess that the world would be remade, born again?"

Michael Anstell shuddered faintly. "I'm no soothsayer, Son," he said. "I didn't know — how big ——"

"It's the millennium," said John.

He walked to the window and stared down upon the city, the harbor, the river, the bay. He turned back to his father.

"You are the greatest man in the world, Father," he said.

Michael Anstell eyed him. "Not so great as you will be, my son," he answered fondly. Yet, had John known it, there was a quaver in his voice that was not due to affection. It was due to uncertainty. For if his own son refused the benefits of Michael Anstell's great scheme —— But he would not. No sane man could, and though John might be insane now, insane with the rest of the world, sanity would be restored to him when he understood how tremendous were his father's plans for him. There could be no permanent sloppy sentimentality in the flesh and blood of Michael Anstell.

"Jane and I want to be married now," said John, simply.

His father eyed him. "What do you mean by 'now,' " he asked.

John laughed. "Why, I mean to-day, but Jane won't have it that way. She says next month."

His father nodded approvingly. "That ought to satisfy you, John. Never rush a woman. You might make her change her mind."

John laughed again. "Not Jane. She won't change."

"Possibly not," said his father dryly. "Still — women have changed their minds, you know. And so have men."

"I'm hardly likely to, Father," said John, confidently.

"Of course not," said Michael Anstell. "And you don't want to. Why, Jane Maynard's husband will be — well, he can get out of this world almost anything that he asks of it."

Bewilderment appeared in John's eyes. "What more could I want — than Jane?"

"Well, you're not going to quit having outside interests, you know," said his father. "You might," he laughed, "want to be President."

"I've no political ambitions, Father. And — that's absurd, anyway. I — I — well, I'm not old enough."

"You will be some day," replied Michael. "Leave that to time. And to me. And to Jane."

"I'm perfectly willing to, dad," chuckled the young man.

They talked perfunctorily of other things, and then John left, to perform a bit of business having to do with the transfer of some real estate. In the outer office he paused to obtain papers necessary for the transaction. He was filled with pride, because his father had never entrusted him with quite so important a piece of business as this one now.

So he stayed just long enough to see Mizler, the ex-saloon-keeper, enter the outer office. John recognized the man; he heard him, with an insistence that overrode de-

nial, give his name and demand that it be taken into Michael Anstell.

He left as a secretary, impressed by the man's earnestness, was acquiescing.

"Mizler." The name stuck in his mind. The man whom he had seen in the lower West Side saloon and again later, leaving his father's house. Remembrance of his father's denial that he had ever been in the saloon leaped into his mind, turning it sick.

For events had driven from his thoughts the memory of that lie of Michael Anstell's. It had puzzled John at the time, hurt him, disappointed him, but — he had forgotten it. Now he remembered.

Desperately he tried to put it from him. His father was perfect; therefore he could not lie. And yet — he was facing the first test of the new creed, the new spirit, the new thought that animated men. And desperately he thought to evade the test. It was so slight, so trivial. Then, suddenly, he grew ashamed at the thought of the injustice he might be working toward his father. Suppose that he, John Anstell, had been misled by a fancied resemblance.

But he must *know*. Downstairs he waited.

Upstairs, the interview between Mizler and Michael Anstell was brief. Mizler had come to see the billionaire for no reason in the world save to offer apology.

"Michael," he had said nervously, "I couldn't wait another minute. I done you dirt in my heart. I thought you had some sort of scheme. Michael, you're the greatest man in the world, and I had to tell you so."

Anstell had hidden a smile. If Mizler believed, the last stronghold of doubt had been conquered.

"My proposed methods, Mizler, were stupid," he said. "I'm glad that we didn't use them."

Mizler, tears streaming down his broad cheeks, had

shaken hands with the billionaire and left. In the lobby of the building he saw the young man whom he had recognized, from scores of newspaper pictures, as Anstell's son.

John was waiting for him, to put a question for thinking which he hated himself. Yet he must put it. But he didn't. For Mizler, still in the throes of self-contempt because he had doubted Michael Anstell, advanced to the young man and suddenly seized his hand.

"You don't know me, young man, but I know you," he said. "I've known your father years and years. A great man and a good man. I just been up to see him, to tell him how sorry I am — my God, I doubted him." He said the words as though he had been guilty of blasphemy.

"Doubted him?" echoed John.

"Yes, because he wanted me to fix up some fake miracles for him."

"Fake miracles?" gasped John.

"Sure. But we never done 'em. We didn't need to. The real ones come along too quick. I couldn't understand — then — why your father, if he was on the level with his scheme, wanted any phony stuff. But he's a bigger man than you or me. He knew how big his plan was. He didn't want to take no chances of its floppin'. And he was right. Dead *right*. What harm would a little play-actin' have done, if it made the world better? I done him wrong, and I had to tell him so. I want to tell you, too, so you can know how great a man, how brainy a man, your father is."

That was all. But it was enough. So — Michael Anstell had not been scrupulous in his methods of imposing upon the world the Day of Faith. For a moment John was indignant. Then he saw with Mizler's eyes. Surely,

if ever the end justified the means, the bringing about of the Day of Faith had been that end.

Then, another thought came to him. Why had his father denied knowing Mizler? He shrugged. Because he could not afford to arouse any distrust in his own son. For John recognized that his distrust would have been aroused. His father was right in the slight deception.

But, and this thought raced through his mind, right cannot be founded on wrong. And it would have been wrong to deceive the world with manufactured miracles. For that matter, and his brain reeled before the idea, perhaps there *had* been manufactured miracles. Perhaps — he almost ran out into the street, as though to flee the wicked thought.

But he could not escape it. If Mizler had been procured to obtain false miracles, perhaps —

Why? It had been strange enough, his father's sudden conversion to the Hendricks creed. But to procure false witnesses to make certain that creed's acceptance — Before God, it could not be true. Why — it tore down all the foundations. His neighbor was perfect; he must so believe. That meant his father.

His thoughts were chaotic. Slowly, out of them resolved one idea. A little while ago Michael Anstell had told him that all things were within the reach of Jane Maynard's husband. The Anstell blood was in the veins of John. His father could not have held the spirit that had conquered the finances of the world without transmitting something of that lust for power, though it had been so long dormant, to his own flesh and blood.

"My neighbor is perfect."

But the faintest doubt had crept in. Had his father deliberately been hinting certain things? Suddenly the mouth of the young man became hard. He would not

doubt until he had had a talk with his father. He would hold to the Hendricks creed until then.

But Michael Anstell had won. Into the heart of his son he had poured the poison of ambition. He had taken him up onto a mountain and shown him the kingdoms of the earth, and John Anstell was no prophet, he was no divinity. He was human, suddenly awakened to his common humanity with his father.

“President,” Michael Anstell had said.

But what was a Presidency to a man who was the son of Michael Anstell and would be the husband of Jane Maynard? It was nothing. Such a man might aspire — merciful God, to what might he not aspire?

For a barrel may be filled with apples, and all save one of them may be sound and whole. But the whole and sound do not make the rotten apple like themselves. Rather, the one rotten apple corrupts the whole barrel.

So it is with men. One evil example — Michael Anstell, not realizing that already his son was seeing eye to eye with him, but believing that soon enough he would, imagined that the spread of rottenness could be controlled.

As well suppose that one may make a hole in a dam, and that the hole will not grow. Michael Anstell had the greatest imagination in the world; he had proved that. But he was neither god nor devil; he was merely an infinitely evil man, and with the limitations of his kind.

CHAPTER XXX

EACH one is taken up onto a mountain. To every man and to every woman comes that ascent, and the kingdoms of the earth are unfolded before them.

John Anstell's body walked the streets of New York, but his mind was on the mountain top, and he listened to the honeyed promises. His brain reeled before the tremendous prospect. The son of Michael Anstell and the husband of Jane Maynard. . . .

He was hungry and exhausted when finally he turned toward his father's home. He would end these doubts that had come to him, these dreadful doubts that at first seemed wicked, incredible, but that association somehow robbed of evil.

He had become exalted; with all the rest of the world — save Michael Anstell — he had climbed the spiritual heights, and the effort took toll of his body. Then he had descended into the deep pit of despair, and reaction from the journeys had cooled his mind, rendered it susceptible to cunning suggestion.

Michael Anstell was in his study when his son arrived. Before him, on a huge flat desk, were innumerable papers awaiting his signature. His great dream made him postpone signing them. As a billion souls dreamed to-night of the great thing that had come to the world, so Michael Anstell dreamed, only his dream was of the great thing that had come to him.

Sitting there, staring unseeingly ahead, his mind reveled in an evil delight. "The conquest of the world," people had said to him. Ah, if they only knew. They

thought that the world had conquered itself, that an idea had overthrown its evil. But Michael Anstell knew that he, and he alone, had conquered the world, had made it his slave, the meek doer of his will. He looked up as his son entered the room. His eyes hardened, and his lean yet still muscular old body stiffened as though to repel an assault.

For he read the meaning of John's haggard eyes, his disheveled hair, his clothing spotted with mud from careless striding across uncleaned crossings. Michael Anstell had fought many battles in his day. Strong men had yielded to the force of his mighty will. But to-night he was facing a man who was flesh of his own flesh, bone of his own bone, and will of his own will.

Yet, though prepared for struggle, he was supremely confident of victory. His son *was* his son. A pretty face might make him momentarily forgetful of his paternity, might temporarily make him disdain those things which in the eyes of Michael Anstell were the only realities, — wealth and power.

An idea might claim his mind for awhile, and he might seem to believe in chimeras, but sanity would return to him in good time, and then — Michael Anstell had no doubt as to what John would do then.

He knew at once that John had discovered something. He would have preferred delay. He had planned subtlety, had intended to use that as his weapon. An occasional remark, like those of this afternoon, until the young man was ready. But his supreme confidence in himself would not let him dodge the issue now.

“Good evening, John,” he said pleasantly.

The younger man stopped just inside the door. For a moment he stared at his father, then slowly and carefully he closed the door. He tossed his hat upon a chair

and strode toward his father. A yard away he stopped.

"Father! What have you done?" he cried.

The old man stared at him.

"What do you mean, John?" he asked quietly.

"You know," cried John. "I talked with a man named Mizler to-day, and he told me — you *did* go to his saloon; you engaged him to procure ——"

"And then told him not to, John," interrupted his father dryly.

The young man's hand passed across his forehead and eyes, as though to brush something away.

"But how do I know that you didn't get some one else?"

"Sit down," said Michael Anstell coldly. He waited until his son was seated. Then he spoke again. "Suppose that I did?" he demanded.

"But why?" cried John.

On the lips of Michael Anstell appeared a faint smile. He knew that he had won; the subtle hints of this afternoon had done their work. John Anstell was his own son.

"Can't you guess?" he asked.

Again the younger man brushed at his eyes. "No," he replied. But his voice shook. His father's smile grew broader.

"John, isn't the world better for the Day of Faith?" asked Michael Anstell.

The younger man nodded.

"Has it done any harm?" demanded Anstell. His voice grew louder and firmer.

Again the young man nodded.

"Then why," continued his father, "become excited?"

"But the rest of the world believes, hopes ——"

"And are faith and hope such wicked things?" asked the billionaire.

Impatiently the son shook his head. "Let's not have sophistry, Father," he said. "I want to know — why."

Old Anstell leaned back in his chair; his body relaxed, and his eyes grew less hard. The game was in his own hands now; he had won and knew that he had won.

"As a matter of fact, son," he said, "there were no false miracles. They weren't necessary. The world took the idea ——"

"But why?" repeated John. "Why did you — oh, I know now, Father. You don't believe; you never did believe. You didn't really intend or want me to believe. But why?"

"Why?" Anstell's thin hands, blotched with brownish spots that age brings, interlocked. "You are a young man, John. To-day's happenings have no meaning beyond to-day. Not to you. But to me, who have lived longer than you — there has been war in the world, John. It is not over yet; it is never over. There is worse than war in the world. There is unrest, instability, a lack of confidence in the people who must rule the world. All over the world, since the war, there has been a disbelief in the good intention of the only men who can help the world. Vain dreamers spout insane ideas, and men have listened to them.

"The world is highly organized, John. Without organization there would be chaos. You know what has happened in various countries since the war. They have tried to violate economic laws, and the result is pandemonium. Men are not able to rule themselves. Always a few strong men must guide them, must lead them on the way.

"But the world has blamed these few strong men for the things that have happened in the world. Instead of blaming itself, putting the blame where it belongs, on the human nature of every one, they try to put it on their

rulers. The world has grown tired of rulers. Maddened with half-baked, undigested ideas, the world wanted change. What would happen to the world if change came, the pseudo-scientists, the half-grown economists, the would-be Messiahs have not stopped to consider. For half a century a wicked doctrine has been preached in the world, and the foolish, the idle, the vicious have listened to it. Men have preached the doctrine of disorganization, of ingratitude toward the great figures who have made the world what it is, have caused it to progress, instead of to retreat. Because a millennium wasn't in the world, these insane radicals have wanted to destroy it.

"The war made them more powerful. They could not, would not understand that war is inevitable, always has existed, always will exist. Instead, they professed to believe that a few individuals could plunge nations into war, that economic conditions, economic laws had nothing to do with it.

"They denied that economic laws were laws at all. They said that they were made and enforced by greedy men for their own benefit. Any man who could jingle two dollars together in his pocket was a thief or worse. Men who by their industry and frugality amassed a little capital, which capital they immediately turned over to labor, causing productiveness in the world, were worse than criminals, according to these radicals.

"Business — the whole foundation of modern life, the skeleton, the flesh, the blood, the mind and the heart of society — was decried by them. Business was wrong, and the more successful the business the more wrong it was.

"Government was wrong, even though it was a government established by the people themselves. *Everything was wrong!* There was no reverence in the world, no regard for brains or for position, no matter how honestly

that position was won. Men were not as good as each other; they were better.

"How could such a world endure longer? The wisest minds sounded unheeded warnings. They told us that civilization was rocking to a fall. Other civilizations had perished; why not this one? Yet the cranks, the radicals, the men eaten up with envy of their betters — they sneered at the warning, or said that our civilization was no good, that it would better be destroyed than continue in its evil.

"And the leaders of the world, knowing that these things had been said before, and that civilization and an ordered society had continued, refused to heed the danger signals that were flown. Only I saw, clearly, to what the world was coming. And so — I headed it off."

"What do you mean?" demanded John.

The old man shrugged. "The world always wants an idea. It leaps to seize at panaceas. One moment it is a tariff that will make a nation prosperous and happy. The next moment it is free trade. One day it is a republic; the day before it was a monarchy. But always and forever one idea has existed and will exist — religion.

"To gain their religion, to control it, to *own* it. Then to work for the world ——"

"Or have the world work for you?" cried the young man.

Again his father shrugged. "Children, my son, must be set tasks. The people of the world are children. Some one must set the tasks, must organize them. I knew, my son, that you would understand." He hesitated a moment, eyeing the younger man. "That you would approve," he added.

As quick of wit, almost, as his father, was John Anstell. Otherwise, from a subtle hint and from the words of Mizler, he would not have drawn the conclusions which

had been in his mind when he entered this study. Tramping the streets of the city, the torture of doubt had slowly left him, leaving him susceptible to the soothing ointment of ambition. He had been horrified, was still horrified, but, — ambition shrieked aloud to him.

“Approve?” he muttered.

“We cannot shirk our tasks, the tasks that have been set for us; we cannot drop the burdens from our shoulders. John, my son, is it for nothing that men fought their way up from savagery, from kinship with the beasts? Is it true that in a hundred thousand years there has been no progress? Yet the radicals, the unrestful, would have had us believe such an absurdity. They would have taken the world from the men who had faith in the integrity, the ability, of the past and the present, and hope for the future.

“They told us that what we had was worthless, and they declared that they would destroy it. And I, seeing how near they were to the destruction that they promised us — I took the Hendricks idea, I gave it to the world, and — did I do wrong?”

John Anstell read the sophistry in every word. Yet louder than the specious words was the call of ambition.

“I don’t know, Father,” he stammered.

“Don’t know? When I have made myself ruler of the world, and you are my heir? And you don’t know?”

The old man seemed to tower above the form of his son, although he still sat, leaning negligently back, his thin fingers interlocked. But his eyes were eager. He was making, months before he had expected to do so, his final argument, his strongest plea.

“Ruler of the world?” gasped John.

“Ruler of the world,” pronounced Michael Anstell. “Is there a man in the world who will doubt me? Is there a legislature that will refuse me a request? Is

there a court that will not confirm me in my possessions? Is there a man that dare raise his voice against me? Against me, the proponent of the Day of Faith, the man that made it possible?

"Listen, my son. The world is mad; it always will be mad. And madmen, though weak, may destroy the strong. But what have the weak ever given the world? Has not everything worth while been forced upon the weak by the strong? You know that it has! Now, with the world rocking to disaster, I saw a way to save it."

Bewildered, John lifted his eyes to meet his father's burning glance.

"Then you do believe ——" he ventured.

Old Anstell shook his head impatiently. "To save the world, I said. I mean, not to deliver it over to fanatics. Oh, I know it seems that it has been delivered over to them, but — I know better. And so will you. Only by the more firmly emplacing the strong in their position can civilization, the ordered society for which millions have died, endure. You and I, John, are the strong. With no one in the world to doubt us, to question us, can we not so firmly plant the present social order that it will endure for ages yet to come?"

His son gasped. "How?"

Michael Anstell's smile was not a pretty thing to watch. "How?" he echoed. "As has been already done. The people are fools, idiots. They are always enslaved by a new idea. They think that they comprehend a new thought, but they never do. I have watched it going slowly mad these past months, have encouraged it to grow insane. Because a worse insanity threatened it, an insanity that made it doubt all that was strong and beneficial in our times. Now, the world doubts nothing, and you and I ——"

"How?" repeated John.

The teeth of Michael Anstell showed in a wolf-like smile.

“By acquiring, or controlling, all the property in the world. I stand in a supreme position. Only Jane Maynard is higher in the world’s esteem, and she will be your wife. We shall own the earth, acquire the land, the transportation, the mines, the industries — everything. There will be no more agitators, no more strikes, no more periods of unproductiveness. Thrift and industry and brains shall rule this world, as always they have ruled it. But no longer will their rule be threatened by half-witted radicals. In the past, if I acquired a bit of property, a thousand demagogues denounced me.

“But who dare denounce me now? Who dare denounce Michael Anstell, the father of the Day of Faith?”

He paused. Slowly John sank back in his chair. He saw the great and evil vision, and in a million ways it drew him to it. Power, unlimited power, undreamed of wealth!

“But the people. Will they ——”

His father laughed. “The people? The ignorant dolts; the fools who swallow whole the pill that I prepared. My son, when have the people ever waked up, ever understood? What have their churches been for, but to make them contented, bow the more readily to the yoke? Have the people, in all time, ever done anything but effect an exchange of masters? Their revolutions, their social awakenings — they are absurd. But we — we shall give them the only government that they should have: a benevolent autocracy. We shall let them go through their pitiful functions of self-rule, but — no more. We shall rule. And your sons shall rule. Instead of a world gone mad with license, we shall found a world restrained by superior minds ——”

"Father, you talk like — is it possible? Won't they find out, and ——"

"Find out?" Michael Anstell's laugh was robust, ringing. "When have they ever found out? Haven't their creeds exploited them for thousands of years, bidding them accept to-day's burden because it will be lifted to-morrow? If creeds that have been accepted by only a comparatively few have endured for centuries, why should not mine, that has been accepted by all the world, endure even longer? What do *you* think, John? Or have you drunk too deeply of the hogwash, the sentimental damn-foolishness, that the rest of the world has become intoxicated upon? Or are you my son, my own son?"

John Anstell's answer was a grip of his father's hand. He was the son of Michael Anstell, who would help his father realize his great dream, the greatest since Mahomet had conquered half a continent. For the Bland Hendricks creed had at the start seemed silly, futile to him. He had been won to its adherence by a charming smile, a lithe figure and a mass of glorious hair. He had been won by no arguments, by no hope within him. And so, he surrendered to greed and ambition.

Outside these walls a freed world knew at last what perfect trust could mean. The safety of property, of the body, of the mind and heart! The greatest blow in behalf of mankind had been struck. Another blow was being prepared, this one to be launched against mankind.

CHAPTER XXXI

THERE is no sinner so great but that he finds his own self-justification. From Judas, through Benedict Arnold to Michael Anstell, the great betrayers justify themselves. They have their reasons, which they advance to themselves. But the time comes to all of them when they must look at their naked souls and know exactly what they are. The reckoning must be paid, postpone the payment though they may.

It had taken Christianity nineteen centuries and more to arrive at the Great Tolerance, for, after all, the Era of Faith meant that as well as many other things. Perhaps, indeed, it meant that more than anything else. To find no fault, to be content, to be happy — And it is the unsuspecting victim who most readily succumbs.

A world that walked in a daze, in a hazy cloud of kindness which obscured all the vices until men felt that they no longer existed; a world of little children, into whose hearts doubt could not enter, whose perfect trust was the trust of babes; this was the world that Michael Anstell assaulted.

Outwardly, after the first few days, the world looked much the same, save that its law courts were deserted, its prisons emptied, its asylums, freed of all restraints, homes instead of barricaded places of confinement. But the trains ran, and the ships sailed and the airships flew. Telegraph, telephone and cable knitted men together as before. Business and commerce continued.

But the difference, though not entirely visible to the physical eye, was there. The absence of policemen, the

cessation of armed preparation; these were visible to the most casual observer. But the things that really counted might not at first have been apprehended by a visitor from another planet, beyond the remarkable happiness that seemed on every face.

For no longer did the law of *meum* and *tuum* dominate the world. All society and most of religion had grown out of the observance of that law, and now it was discarded. Generosity instead of greed; this was the great change. A purse left on a park bench was there when its owner returned. No doors were locked in this, the Era of Faith.

All rivalries had broken down. Beyond perfection there is no height. Without jealousy there can be no rivalry, save the generous one entered into for the pure joy of sportive competition. And there was no jealousy, either of individuals or of nations.

How easy of solution, in those first few days of the new era, were found the problems that had vexed the centuries. The man of color was no longer hated; nor did he hate. He had no desire to force himself upon another race, and the other race had no desire to repel him. Each kept his path, confident in the generous good faith of the other.

There were bankrupt nations in the world, who had sought by every device to avoid the payment of their obligations. But now their credit was restored, for there was no question as to their intention to pay. There were men bankrupt, too, of morals, and women likewise. But the slate was cleaned, without a mark upon its surface.

Those inhibitions which fear had placed upon a race; these were done away with. The much-discussed Eighteenth Amendment no longer bothered men. For into the world had come restraint. If a man wanted a drink, his neighbor knew that satisfaction of that want would

endanger no one. Tobacco and the other mild relaxations were not banned. Even the fanatic knew that harm could not ensue.

A world that, because it considered its neighbor perfect, had become entirely perfect, so far as man could comprehend the meaning of that word. A world that sang laudations instead of hymns of hate. . . .

The churches, all creeds, continued. Men went there to worship God. But outside, in the broad fields and highways, they worshiped man, man who had been made in the image of God.

The visions of the Utopians had become a reality at last. The dream of the martyrs, the hopes of the prophets; these mankind knew to-day.

Auto-hypnosis? Who could tell? A man enters a revival meeting and in three minutes, the tears streaming down his cheeks, announces that he is converted. We say that he is hypnotized by his surroundings, that he could not overcome the emotional circumstances. But another man, after three years of study, announces his conversion to a creed, and we do not talk of hypnotism or emotional qualities at all. Had the world reached this Era of Faith by a conscious effort extending over centuries? But perhaps it had. Perhaps this Era was the goal of the teachings of Christianity.

It had taken the world over nineteen centuries of Christianity to build this edifice. It took exactly nineteen days for Michael Anstell to tear it down.

For on the nineteenth day one of his secretaries learned what the Anstells were doing. What three men know is no longer a secret. By to-morrow a dozen knew, and then the great debacle began.

For eighteen days the Anstells worked feverishly. Both of them believed that they had plenty of time, all the time in eternity. But greed is always hurried, always

hot-blooded. And the greed of all the world, that had passed out of the world's heart, seemed to have done so only to enter the hearts of the Anstells, father and son.

John Anstell was his father's son. Dormant, not non-existent, had been those traits in him which had carried his father to the topmost place in the world's finance. There had been, in his life thus far, no incentive to work. His father had so much. But in comparison with what the world held, Michael Anstell possessed so little. It was John who urged his father on, not the other way around.

At first, the loot was too tremendous. It was difficult to make a choice. But this did not deter the Anstells for long.

A railroad link in the west, acquisition of which would give the Anstell-owned lines a clear dominion over that section of the country, was their first booty. It was easily done. Michael Anstell had a bill passed through both houses of Congress and signed by the President within five days after the celebration of the Day of Faith. That bill nullified the Supreme Court decision in the famous Northern Securities Case. The stockholders in the small road were invited to exchange holdings. The Anstells not merely acquired the strip of road they desired, but made, to boot, several million dollars.

The Anstells waited a week. Not a murmur of criticism from a nation that was chasing rainbows. Then, caution thrown overboard, Michael Anstell boldly advanced his great scheme. A world trust, capitalized in the billions, to hold all the property in the world, practically, to have the sanction of governments, and a majority of its shares to be held by Michael Anstell.

He had dreamed of it years ago. Its uttermost details had been thought out by him, the planning being nothing more than a pleasant mental exercise until the

possibility of a Day of Faith made the world trust also a possibility.

Now he put it boldly into execution. He could ask nothing which a world would not gladly give to him. Was he not the great proponent of the Day of Faith?

By cable, the world was made acquainted with his plan for focusing the commerce of the world into one easily wielded body. America gave him his charter; so did Europe; so did Asia and Africa and South America. To do away forever with commercial rivalry, with the possibility of misunderstanding. That he demanded and took more than half was not observable save to the keenest eye, and the keenest eyes had faith and did not look. A cunning scheme of interlocking holding companies, with small directorates. It was the Federation of the World, the Parliament of Man, apparently. In reality it was the degradation, the enslavement of the world. It turned the world over as his bond servant to Michael Anstell.

But the world, reaping the blessings of an actual Christianity, had no thought of this. Its neighbor was perfect, and that meant Michael Anstell.

Together, working night and day, hardly taking a moment off for any purpose whatsoever, the two men, father and son, worked as mortals never had worked before. And the world was ready to give what they asked. There was no mentality required on the part of either Anstell; nothing but a Satanic greed.

On the morning of the nineteenth day, so smoothly had the ways been greased for them, the Anstells received word that the final link in the chain had been forged. Now, sooner or later, but inevitably, the world would know that it labored or idled at the behest of the Anstells. But even when it found out, they feared nothing. The phrase, "My neighbor is perfect," would save them. And if that failed, the laws could be revived.

And none had suspected. Even so shrewd a person as Judge Galway had been duped, with all the rest of the world. Whenever the Anstells chose to tighten their grasp, the world would be milked. Congratulating each other, making further plans, deciding that it was unnecessary to do anything more, the two men were incautious. Long and sustained effort made them, in the moment of victory, relax, drop those precautions which had been so vitally necessary.

So it was that a clerk, noiselessly approaching the door behind which the Anstells gloated, heard words that almost frightened him.

"It's settled," Michael Anstell was saying in a jubilant voice. "Not a train or a ship or a plane or a motor can move without bringing tribute to us. We rule the world, my son."

John's voice was equally exultant. "And they won't find it out ——"

His father's laughter was harsh. "It would take the shrewdest minds in the world ten years to begin to unravel what we have done. And we could invoke the courts of the world to delay them longer. And the world has always found it cheaper to surrender to men of genius than to oppose them. And suppose that some one did suspect? Who would listen to him, much less believe him? We have been sanctioned by the governments of every nation in the world. Nothing short of a world revolution would take away what we have gained. And who, preaching the Hendricks doctrine, is going to start a revolution? Now, to-morrow, we'll sell some of the world trust, make the price lower ——"

His son's laughter mingled with his. Outside, the clerk's hand dropped to his side. He tiptoed away from the door without knocking. He had come, bringing with

him a sheaf of certificates in the new world trust, termed the Universal Production Company.

Several rooms beyond the billionaire's private office the young clerk sat down at his desk. His ears had not deceived him. He had not meant to listen, but had paused at the sound of voices, fearful lest he intrude upon an important conference. The door, slightly ajar, had permitted him to hear — sacrilege, blasphemy! It was no less, and yet — His ears had not deceived him. The Day of Faith had been a monumental scheme to enrich, further, the already Cræsus-like Anstells.

The young man was not of the stuff of which heroes are made. His first impulse, to disbelieve his ears, was followed by the impulse to rush in and destroy the monsters who mocked the world. But a third impulse came to him. The Anstells were going to sell "short" to-morrow, to reduce the price of these shares which they coveted.

Business still went on. There were already men who said that the establishment of the Universal Trust would abolish all the petty and mean — though they did not use these terms — trading in the world, and the world was listening to their words. But the stock market still did business, and to the stock market went the clerk. He first drew his savings from the bank and then sold "short" a thousand shares of Universal. Then he went home, to struggle in loneliness with himself.

That night he raved in a nightmare; he awoke in a fever. A doctor, called in, listened to his words. He was a venal man, and the next morning he, too, sold "short" in Universal. He had a friend to whom he was under obligation. For virtue's rewards are too intangible. Happiness was not enough. Beneath the new-found virtue of the world slumbered the old Giant of Greed. Kind

words spread slowly; evil ones travel on the wings of the night. So virtue is outpaced by evil.

A world had found content and happiness and freedom from the old ills. Even the ills of the body, because they had been rendered negligible by the peace in the world, had become almost non-existent. The miracle of Lacy Parker's daughter had been followed by thousands more since the Great Affirmation. Yet, with all this, the world was ready to be corrupted by an evil example.

So, in Eden, with all that heart could want, Adam fell. — Here, in this newer Eden, man after man learned of the Anstell scheme — and fell!

Subtly, in whisperings, the word went forth that the Anstells were not sincere, that the Day of Faith was like other promises made to the suffering world, made to be broken. Men could not see that it was their own faith that wavered, that the Anstells did not matter. Men only knew that they had been deceived, somehow. For truth is not so important, in the eyes of men, as its exponents.

Yegg Darby, living decently, honestly, for the first time in his life working, heard the rumors that spread like wildfire over the city, the State, the nation, the world. He was of the weakest, the most venal class in the old world, before the new world had made all men alike.

Yegg Darby, like all the world, had heard the truth, and the truth had set him free, free from the old skulking ways, the hatred of his fellows, the suffering of their hatred. He did not know that the truth was the truth, that nothing can change it, that it has always existed and can never die. He only knew that a truth had been imposed upon him, unasked, and that it had been done so through no regard for him, but for selfish reasons only. For he didn't question the reliability of the rumor. The world never questions evil report; it accepts it.

The world had been changed, but the change was as lasting as the heart of man, and the heart of man meant the hearts of all men. Evil needs only the slightest foothold to make itself conqueror of mankind. It had a foothold now in the hearts of the Anstells, had crept from them to the clerk, to the doctor, to the doctor's friend and his further friends, and so out from the byways into the main roads, until, daring, it lifted its dreadful head for men to see and recognize and — welcome.

For Yegg Darby welcomed it. Until to-day he had been suddenly happy, glorying in his new-found rehabilitation, in his equality with his equals. But now his daily work seemed drear, drab. Why should he bother with eight hours' toil, when there were easier ways?

One of those easier ways occurred to him at once. In the Foundation, on Carey Street, there were five hundred dollars.

The streets through which Darby passed, late that night, were not as they had been these past few weeks. For men, instead of mingling freely, were furtive, hung in jealous groups. The example of evil was spreading. None yet openly denied the Great Creed, but fewer pronounced it with their lips, agreed with it in their hearts. Suspicion had come back into the world, as when the sun is suddenly obscured and a long-forgotten fog comes back, chilling the marrow, bringing disease.

Yegg Darby had been proudly walking the middle of the sidewalk. Now he slunk along close to the wall, fearful of every casual glance; he had been as a god; now he was as a beast again. And so he reached the Foundation.

Jane Maynard had seen little of John Anstell these past days. She understood that he was engaged on matters important for the permanent establishment of the

new régime in the world, and moreover, she was busied herself.

The town of Leland had taken a great pride in that it was the birthplace and home of Bland Hendricks. It had slain him for an idea of which it had disapproved. But now that it approved his idea, that the world approved it, it paid him honor.

Jane had attended the services in commemoration of the founder of the new creed. Once back in Leland, it had been restful, after the labors of the past months, to spend some time there, resting among her old friends. That the town honored her as it had never honored any other citizen meant nothing. But that her old friends were glad to see her meant much. She had left them under a cloud, mental and spiritual. To return and be met with warm affection—it was worth while. Also, there had been other matters.

She had telegraphed John Anstell the hour of her arrival. But a wreck delayed her train. It was after midnight when she alighted in New York, and John met her in the station. Those other matters which had occupied her thoughts had been mainly John Anstell. Did she love him? Somehow, lately, she had been wondering.

At sight of him, his clean youth, she berated herself for her recent doubts. Why had she doubted her affection for him? She was glad to see him, and couldn't answer. Yet, in the car on the way to the Foundation, she avoided his lips, while thoughts of Barnett crowded into her mind. She had no thought that she loved Barnett, but—she was restless, fearful of herself. And so it was a rather piqued young man who accompanied her into the Foundation. Great plans, to which Jane was secondary, occupied him now, but still—he loved her. And wanted her.

So he followed her into the assembly room and groped

for her in the darkness. But she evaded him, puzzled at her own action, and turned on the light. And then she screamed. For the money, the symbolic money, that should have been on the table, was gone!

CHAPTER XXXII

ONLY once she screamed; then, her eyes frightened, her cheeks and throat white, and her body trembling, she stared at young Anstell. For a moment he met her glance. The color had fled from his cheeks also, and in his eyes stood something akin to fear. But he mastered himself quickly. These past weeks had made him the fit son of his father, swift to meet emergency and conquer it.

He had lifted his hand as Jane screamed; in obedience to that silent command she was silent. Staring at each other, the horror-stricken girl and the alert youth, between them was fought the battle of the ages, the battle between Good and Evil. Neither of them knew of the battle, yet it was being fought.

Slowly Anstell's fingers went to his lips; he nodded meaningly to Jane and tiptoed to the door. He closed it softly. Then he turned back to her.

"It's all right," he said soothingly.

"All right?" the girl looked at him, uncomprehending.

He nodded. "Nobody heard you; nobody will know."

"Nobody will know?" she echoed.

He nodded again, this time with emphasis. "That's it. You don't want it known, do you? Besides," he added quickly, warned by a flash in her violet eyes, "it may be around here, may have fallen to the floor——"

But they both knew better. The book which had weighted the money in its place was lying, half-opened, at the far end of the table. It took no imagination to visualize the lean, greedy hand that had pushed it hastily aside.

Jane shook her head. A sob came from her throat. "It's been — stolen!" She hesitated over the last word, then it came forth, pregnant with horror.

Anstell shrugged. "Impossible. Who, in all the world ——"

She stopped him with raised hands, a gesture of despair. "I've felt something — these past days — I can't believe — my neighbor *is* perfect. I know it, but ——"

The world had held faith in goodness, and that faith had conquered mankind. But doubt had crept in. For concrete facts will destroy a faith not builded in the very foundation of the heart. The faith that had come to the world had been implanted there; it had not grown there from the seedling. Doubt could not be around her without affecting her. She sank down into a chair and covered her eyes with her hands. For she had vision. She knew that the Great Dream was ending, that the bitter awakening was at hand.

How she knew it she could not have told; any more than, months ago, she could have told what she intended, what she hoped, when she opened the Foundation on Carey Street. For we may think that we act in accordance with the instructions of our intellect, the desires of our will; but we do not think correctly. Within us, mastering us, are the impulses of a thousand ancestors, the beliefs, the hopes, the faiths of them all, working upon the clay of our minds to mold them as they will. We do not act; we react, and what may cause the reaction we cannot tell. But through the centuries man has hoped, has prayed, and bitter disillusion has been his reward. So we to-day, in advance of the fact, hope for the best but fear, and sometimes know, the worst.

"Of course he is. This money," cried Anstell. "What does it matter? It's only a symbol; it means nothing ——"

"Nothing?" Jane's hands came down from her eyes.
"It stands for ——"

"But what it stands for hasn't been injured," cried Anstell. "What does a symbol count for when the truth itself still endures?"

"But the symbol *is* the truth and ——" Jane ceased. Anstell took her pause for yielding to his suddenly conceived argument.

"It represents the truth, that's all," said John. "All we have to do is put other bills in place of those that are gone. And we'll do it right now."

He put his hand in his pocket and drew forth a narrow billfold. He had the money out, was placing it upon the table, when Jane spoke.

"You — you'd do — *that*?" she asked. Her voice was husky, tremulous.

He eyed her. "Why not? If it gets out that this money has been taken, people will know that a thief is in the world. You don't want that."

"They'll know it anyway," said Jane.

"How?" demanded Anstell.

"Can such a thing be hidden?" she countered.

"Why not? I won't tell, and you won't tell. Because just one person has proved false to the new ideal doesn't mean anything. Does it?" he challenged.

"It means everything," she replied. "Because if our faith is not universal, it is nothing. If one disbelieves, then disbelief is not conquered and faith has not won."

He smiled at her. "Jane, you're tired. It's been a hard journey, slow, tedious. You're not yourself. When you've slept — here!" On the table he carefully placed the bills and upon them laid the book. "There," he said triumphantly. "Just the same as it ever was!"

"The same?" she breathed. "Can *you* say that?"

"Why not?" he asked.

Her gentle eyes were suddenly hot with wrath. "Somewhere in the city, John, is a man who has broken away from the faith. Doesn't that, in itself, change everything?"

She was tired, unreasonable, and — a woman. Women were things oddly compounded of shrewd common sense and hysteria. It was woman who had supported, through the centuries, the soothsayers and the fortune tellers. Woman could not deal with a situation logically; she could meet it only impulsively. Jane was doing this now. So, soothingly, Anstell smiled. He put a hand upon her shoulder.

"Of course not, you dear silly thing," he laughed. "As if one man could change the destiny of the world. Why, if a thousand broke away, it would do no harm."

She breathed deeply, and the movement of her shoulder might have seemed the unconscious act of respiration. But it caused Anstell's hand to drop away from her. And when he would have touched her again, she had moved her chair slightly back.

"No harm?" she said bitterly. "Where, then, would our faith be?"

"A billion people would still have it," he retorted.

"A billion people had faith before the Day of Faith," she said. "But did their faith abolish the prisons, the making of munitions, the police, the law, the armies and navies of the world?"

"But they *are* abolished," said Anstell. "They can't come back."

"Can't come back? To a world in which a thief wanders? The thing that drove them away was faith. With faith gone, what barrier will keep them away?"

"But faith isn't gone; that's what I'm telling you," he said. "One man may have lost it, but — what does that matter?"

"I, too, have lost it," she said.

"You?"

She shrugged wearily. "Why not? That money, which all these months has been inviolate, has been stolen. Can I have faith in the man who took it?"

"He may return it," said Anstell.

"But how could he take it? What brought forth his greed, his dishonesty?"

"What conquered that greed?" demanded Anstell. "The Day of Faith. Won't that spirit reconquer him?"

"The world," said Jane, "must be reconquered, then. Oh, don't you see? While one man, in all the world, refused to adhere, the conquest was not achieved! We only thought it was, and ——"

"You mustn't think like this," said Anstell. "Who knows? The one man. And he'll repent, come back here. Meanwhile, my money will be here; no one will know."

"You'd have me deceive the people?" she asked.

"Deceive is an ugly word," objected Anstell. "For their own good, withhold the information from them."

She rose suddenly. "I'm tired," she said. "And I'm silly and — let me think about it."

His arms went toward her, but she evaded him. "Not to-night — please," she said.

"But, Jane," he protested. "I haven't seen you — for so long. Don't you — care — any more?"

"I don't know," she told him.

"You don't know?" he exclaimed.

She gazed at him. "John, do you believe in the Hendricks creed?"

His color rose slightly, but he met her eyes.

"Of course," he answered. "Haven't I proved that?"

"You believe that your neighbor is perfect?" she insisted.

"Why, yes," he replied.

"Then why do you suggest deceiving him? Yes, deceiving. You say the word is ugly, but the act is uglier still. Why?"

"Because," he answered, "I would not break down the faith of a world."

She pondered his statement. Slowly she shook her head. "Good night, John," she said.

He stared at her. There was a finality about her utterance that warned him. To-night she was in a nervous, high-strung mood. To-morrow she would be different, amenable to reason. Since that first meeting when he had suddenly kissed her, there had been no disagreement between them. All lovers must have quarrels; they could expect to be no exception to the universal rule. He would leave her, until she had had time to think.

She sat down again after he had left, staring at the money which he had placed upon the table. Was she idolatrous? Was she placing a symbol above the thing for which the symbol stood? Was John right? The faith of a world, he had said. He would not break it down. Therefore, to preserve that faith, he would deceive the world. Was it right?

Ah, but if she conceded that it was right, did she not then deny all that the Great Idea stood for? For the new thing that had come into the world was based on truth, and nothing but the truth. To permit a falsehood to creep in — Were falsehoods ever justified? Was one right in advancing false evidence to protect a good idea? Ah, wasn't she now dallying with blasphemies? The ancient priests of the discarded worships of thousands of years ago had doubtless believed in the truth of the philosophies which they preached. But their belief had not prevented them from imposing false miracles upon their followers. The truth, they had decided, could not stand alone.

Jane suddenly came to this comprehension. The truth *could* stand alone if it were the truth. The truth needed no lies to prove its truth. Such paradoxes were for venal profiteers, hypocritically wearing the livery of religion. They were not for one who believed. The truth could stand alone. For her to think, even for one moment, of lifting lying hands to bolster up the truth was blasphemous, as blasphemous as the acts of those proponents of forgotten creeds who called their gods before the multitude to work their manufactured obscene miracles.

She could not do it. She would not do it. Not to break down the faith of the world, John Anstell had said. But to lie, to permit a falsehood to be used, even by implication, to bolster up that faith. . . .

Hours later she fell asleep. But she had decided. She would be faithful to herself. With that clairvoyance which is faith, and which had enabled her to foresee dimly the road before her when she had left the rest cure on the Hudson, so now she saw, gleaming brilliantly, the pinions of victory shining above the tawdry wings of defeat. For truth may not be apparent to all; it may vanish from the minds of most; but somewhere in the world it still exists, and its mere existence makes it mighty.

But she did not have to come to any decision as to her action. The world did that for her. Yegg Darby had stolen the symbolic money. He spent it that same night. For into his heart had crept a self-horror that could be obliterated, he thought, in only one way.

The New Era had not yet had time to change, outwardly, the things of the past. The low grog shops, forbidden by the law, had been closed. But they could be opened. An evil suggestion met as swift a response as, nineteen days ago, a noble suggestion had encountered. Yegg Darby had found a bartender who possessed the keys to his old place of business. A day ago, before the

new doubt had seeped into the world, he might have had difficulty in overcoming the scruples of the man. But we are all one Eve, one Adam; parts of the whole, and responsive, each of us, to what affects the other parts. Darby drank and talked!

Men had gone to bed imbued with the new idea. They awoke like snarling beasts, prepared to rend the neighbor whom but yesterday they had loved.

As during the Bloody Years a plague swept over the world, during the night entering into healthy communities and by morning making it a place of dread disease, so the evil swept through the minds of men. It was no different in its universality from the great plague that had taken twenty million victims during the Bloody Years. That plague had come unheralded, unwarning. Those who believed in the rule of the mind had deemed that plague to be due to man's wrong thinking. But it had been a new disease, unknown to medical science. How had whole nations managed to think of a non-existent disease? Who had thought of it first? Why, with a whole world thinking of it at length, did it disappear from the world?

So now, in the night, skulking, came evil, the evil that had been banished from the world. Men did not have to be told that the New Era was now the old one, and the old one had come back to its own. It was apparent on every face. For even those who held to faith held to it as desperate men, engulfed in the sea, hang to a plank. Hopeless, despairing. . . .

Tom Barnett arose in the morning, conscious of a disturbing night, such a restless period of slumber as he had not known since the world had uttered the Great Affirmation. He didn't know what was wrong. Only a few in all the world knew; but something——

He turned distastefully away from breakfast, dressed

hurriedly and left the house. He was vaguely conscious that the Great Peace was not in evidence this morning, that a Great Restlessness possessed him.

His name was known to millions now. His face was known to thousands. And as he came down the short flight of steps to the sidewalk, one of those thousands, who lounged upon a corner, saw him. His voice lifted in a jeer.

"Here's one of the old perfection kids," he cried. His companions took up the jeer.

Amazed, Tom stopped. Horror gripped his heart.

"What do you mean?" he demanded.

"Mean?" echoed the first speaker. "We mean we got your number, you faker. You and all the rest of the big bums that been trimmin' us."

"Trimming you? In God's name, how?" asked Barnett.

"We ain't tumbled to that yet, but hell! Here for three weeks we been gassin' about perfection, but wages ain't gone up any, have they? Where do *we* come in, we common folks, on your great scheme? I got my rent bill this morning, and it ain't any lower than it was a month ago, and my pay ain't gone up."

There was more, but Tom didn't wait to hear it. He ran to a taxi-stand down the street and entered a machine. He gave the Foundation's address. His chauffeur looked at him curiously.

"There's a heluva mob down there," he said. "I took an old gent down there a while ago. Lots of folks hangin' around there, gettin' the gal who started all this perfection stuff to talk to them. She got 'em buffaloed all right, though. She's a clever one."

"Clever one? Don't you believe in her? In the new idea?" demanded Tom.

The chauffeur winked at him. "Do you, kid? Aw, it

was good dope for a little while, but hell — after all, who got it up? Old Anstell, the billionaire. You couldn't expect a lot of good to come out of a rotten egg like that, could you? "

"What's happened?" demanded Tom.

"What happened three weeks ago?" countered the chauffeur.

"We awoke to the truth," said Tom.

"Is that so?" said the chauffeur, throwing in the clutch. "Well, then we all went to sleep, and now we woke up again."

The grinding of his gears ended the argument.

CHAPTER XXXIII

ON the Day of Faith thousands had crowded into Carey Street to render homage to the great idea and to its great proponent, Jane Maynard. Barnett, wheeling around a corner and entering the humble street which had been purified by fire, on which stood the remodeled building which had been the place of gestation of the Great Idea, saw again a throng of people.

The taxi slowed down to avoid injuring the pedestrians, and Barnett had opportunity to see their faces. They were changed; on that day a few weeks ago exaltation, a spiritual uplifting that touched sublimity, had been visible on every face. To-day he could see doubt, and behind doubt a mighty wrath struggling dumbly for expression.

He sank back on his seat, — bewildered, dazed, awed. In that mental state he reached the Foundation. Before it the crowd milled to and fro. None of that kindness of yesterday was observable. Men pushed and struck. As Barnett paid his driver and crossed the sidewalk, a murmur came from the throats of the crowd. One could not call it menacing, and yet —

He found Jane in the main hall. With her was Morton Anderson. On the face of Jane's uncle was written perplexity; on Jane's he read despair.

"What's happened?" demanded Barnett.

For answer Jane gestured toward the table. Barnett whistled softly.

"Stolen?" he asked.

Anderson nodded heavily. "But I've told Jane not to take it too seriously, not to ——"

Wanly the girl smiled. "You've seen the crowds, Mr. Barnett?"

Barnett nodded.

"Then you know that — it's over," she said.

Barnett sat down and stared at her. Vaguely he heard her uncle protesting that she was mistaken, wrong. But Barnett knew better. Cynic, unbeliever and scoffer he had been. And he had been converted to the Hendricks creed. Not because of what had happened to him on the night he had come to jeer. That miracle of healing, if such it could be termed, had not been permanent. He was still slightly lame, as lame as always he had been. That happening had made him think, and thinking had made him believe.

For the teachings of Christianity, he had come to understand, comprehended man's only way of escape from the dreadful tangle in which he was involved. Those teachings, he believed, had never been practiced. And yet they seemed, amazingly practicable to him. So he had come to believe.

But he had studied; one who is a reporter comes into a contact with mankind that is greater even than the contact of a physician, a judge, or a clergyman. His contact had not made him form a complimentary opinion of mankind. Nor had his studies done so. Yet within mankind, he had always conceded, were possibilities. The possibilities were made probabilities by the new creed.

Because his imagination was great, he understood what a man of lesser imagination yet possibly greater mentality could not have understood: that happiness can only come into the world when all mankind desires that



"You dirty dog, Yegg! This gal is my pal!"

Charles Conklin, Ford Sterling, Eleanor Boardman.

(*The Day of Faith*)

(*A Goldwyn Picture*)

happiness and has a true understanding of what that happiness really means.

Morton Anderson could maintain that nothing serious had really happened to the New Era, but Tom Barnett knew better. The crowds outside were proof enough.

"Over?" he said. "I'm afraid that it is. How did it happen?"

She shrugged. "I don't know. The money was gone when I came home last night ——"

"Not that," he said. "Who ——"

"I don't know who," she said.

He shrugged his shoulders impatiently. "I don't mean the poor man who stole this money. He doesn't count."

"Doesn't count?" demanded Anderson.

Barnett shook his head. "It took a tremendous brain to break down a world's belief. As great a brain as it took to create that belief. The sort of man who commits a petty theft is not the sort of man to overcome the will of a world. Some one else ——" He lapsed into moody silence.

For the converted unbeliever is the most ardent upholder when he finally comes to believe. Tom Barnett had been incredulous at first, then tepid in his belief, then hot as fire in his acceptance of the Great Plan. That, once established, it could fail, had never occurred to him any more than it had occurred to any one else in the world save Michael Anstell.

Before the Day of Faith had worked its miracle, sane men would have scoffed at the possibility of the world accepting and practicing the Hendricks creed. After it had begun to practice, sane men would have scoffed at the idea that the world could ever relinquish its triumph over itself.

But Tom Barnett had believed that not a person in the world had failed to accept the Hendricks creed. He

knew better now. Some one had failed to accept it, some one of tremendous will power, superhuman almost in that it had resisted the rest of humanity. Who?

The telephone rang in the hall outside, and Jane rose wearily to answer it. Barnett leaped to his feet and with a nod she accepted the courtesy. He went to the ringing instrument.

"Hello," he said.

"Hello, this is John Anstell speaking."

"This is Barnett," he replied.

"Oh, you, Barnett. How's Miss Maynard?"

"We-ll," began Barnett, but Anstell cut him short.

"Get her out of the city, at once," ordered Anstell.

"Out of the city? What do you mean?" asked Barnett.

"I mean that hell's broken loose. The people have some crazy idea that Father has done something or other to them — God knows what they think. I don't. But a mob just formed before his house, and we had the police drive them away. A mob of maniacs. One of them actually broke in and harangued Father. Some silly story about a clerk who claims that he overheard Father and myself talking about something or other, and he babbled to his doctor, who told somebody else, and it's spread like wildfire. Father has telephoned the governor, and he's going to put the city under martial law."

"Martial law?" gasped Barnett.

"Certainly. We can't let a mob of vicious madmen go around publicly denouncing an idea that's been accepted by the whole world. Why, the whole business will be ruined. Is Miss Maynard there?"

"I'll call her," said Barnett.

He left the receiver dangling from its cord while he walked into the main hall. "Mr. Anstell to speak with you," he said.

He sat down and waited for Jane's return. Neither he nor Morton Anderson exchanged speech, nor could they hear Jane's conversation. But she returned in a moment. In her violet eyes was blazing a wrath that neither Barnett nor Anderson had ever seen there before. It had been there on the night, so dim in memory now, when Montreal Sammy had invaded her home and caused her father's death. Although this was a different kind of wrath. Hate had been in her eyes then; this was a righteous wrath, as might be kindled in the breast, to gleam from the eyes, of any decent person who has looked at blasphemy.

"Did he tell you?" she demanded.

He nodded. She had never been so beautiful; her slim figure took on for the moment an almost statuesque quality. Yet it was an alive statuesqueness; for from the tips of her fingers to the feet encased in fashionable walking shoes, she was vital.

"Martial law," she cried. "Oh, God, what a travesty! Police, soldiers, to persuade men that they love each other. The cannon's mouth to speak a message of love!"

She fell into a chair, and sobs came from the lovely lips. "Already," she cried. "In twenty days men persecute for the sake of the faith that's in them. The courts, the judges, the law, the soldiery — all to uphold an ideal. Kill for the ideal! Slay each and every one who does not agree — oh, God!"

"I'll stop it," cried Barnett.

"How?" she asked. "I *commanded* him, and he told me that I did not understand. He said that the demoralized police force was ill-equipped to meet a situation of anarchy. He said that all the processes of civil law had broken down in the past three weeks, that only the military, which had not had time for complete disbanding, could cope with the situation. He refused me."

"But doesn't he know what it means?" asked Barnett.

"Know? He told me how it had started, and — that clerk told the truth. No lie concerning the Anstells could have overcome the faith of the world. No pitiful clerk could have pitted his mentality against the will of all the world. No one but Michael Anstell could have done that. It was he! He who duped the world, led it to the heights and pushed it over to gratify his own greed."

"I'll 'phone him; I'll get him to come down here ——"

But she interrupted Barnett with a shake of her head. "He wouldn't come; I asked him. He said that bad as the situation was in New York, it was worse in other places. The mob has taken possession of Harlesstown. The factories, the mills — they are going to destroy them all, wipe out the town ——"

"But why?" gasped Morton Anderson.

"Why Harlesstown? The factory town, where all the agitation has occurred in the past few years. Where labor has always been fighting capital, the agitator's paradise," exclaimed Jane bitterly. "Michael Anstell *owns* that town. If the mob destroys it, he's destroyed. I suppose he thinks so, anyway. And only last week, only yesterday, the papers told of the happiness, the prosperity, unequaled in its history, that had come to Harlesstown. Now ——" Her gesture was the acme of despair.

"Is he going there?" asked her uncle.

"To protect his father's interests," said Jane. Her voice was sardonic, almost sneering. "He places those interests above the interests of the world. Rather than have a factory burn down, he will let a world destroy itself. And I thought," she laughed bitterly, "that greed had been abolished. And it was! Except in the evil heart of Michael Anstell."

“‘My neighbor is perfect,’” quoted Morton Anderson gravely.

She stared at him. On his face was no trace of a smile. He, the man of the law who had told her that he should have been a pirate, who had backed her plan with money because he thought she should have a sporting chance, awakened her to the meaning of what she was saying.

Slowly the angry fires left her eyes; the red blood receded from her cheeks; the palpitant bosom calmed.

“My neighbor is perfect,” she echoed. “He is! He is! Even — even ——”

“Michael Anstell,” said Barnett.

“Even Michael Anstell,” said Jane. She rose from her chair. “It can’t be too late. The world won’t surrender ——” She ran to the telephone and asked for Michael Anstell’s office. He was not there, the frightened voice of a clerk informed her. She rang his home, and from another frightened voice learned that he, with his son, had just left for the railroad station. Their destination was Harlesstown.

She went back into the main hall of the Foundation. “They’ve left — both of them — for Harlesstown,” she said. “I’m going ——”

“So am I,” cried Barnett.

She swept him a glance that was an accolade. “Of course you are,” she told him. He thrilled to glance and words. She counted on him; she relied on him when the man whom she was to marry had failed her. The man whom she was to marry! He knew, at once, that she would never marry John Anstell. Hope, that he had never permitted to enshrine itself within his heart, suddenly bourgeoned there. Forgotten for the moment was the present tragedy, the tremendous fall of all humanity. He remembered only himself, — and her.

But the tragedy became dominant in his mind when they reached the streets. Jane had talked to the mob earlier this morning, had pleaded with it to hold the faith that had been in it. And because they loved her, because they did not yet realize what had happened, could not possibly understand how doubt and distrust had crept back from banishment, they had been pacified.

They still loved her. But they no longer loved their neighbors. How could they? All over New York men and women gathered. The details of the great treason, garbled and misstated, yet true in essence, had spread like wildfire. Michael Anstell had not been sincere. He had backed the Great Plan for selfish reasons. So men were told, and so men believed.

Colossal had been his opportunity for satisfying his greed. All the world knew of the Universal trust. Men guessed what as yet they could not prove — that he owned most of that trust. His purpose was too obvious. Men knew of the laws that had been passed; street orators explained how they would work to the benefit of Anstell and against the interests of the world. Inflamed, men had marched to his house, but he had escaped. And his servants, who would tell Jane his mission, would not inform the mob. Michael Anstell had managed to buy loyalty, at least, with his money. The same voices that three weeks ago had given Michael Anstell such applause as no man in history had ever received, now cursed him.

And against them were pitted the hastily summoned soldiery. They paraded the streets of New York; they surrounded the house of Michael Anstell; their glistening bayonets formed a barricade around his office. Indeed, no financial house downtown but had its armed guard.

The Great Debacle had not merely commenced; it was in full sway; it ruled the world. For not merely in New York had the people cast off the new ideal. All over the

world, revitalized by its brief slumber, hate awoke and stepped forth to its old dominion over the hearts and minds of men.

And those men — and there were hundreds of millions of them — who held to the Great Plan, could offer no battle against the onslaught of hate. They loved their neighbors, they believed them perfect. But that belief, which had conquered all enemies yesterday, was impotent to-day. The thief, the murderer, — these were not held back by the Hendricks creed. And so men who would have believed cast off the faith, yielding to the necessities of the moment.

Should a man die for his faith, a faith which every sense, save that inner one which had bloomed so briefly, told him was false? How could he believe that his neighbor was perfect when his neighbor, in all the viciousness of which mankind is capable, rushed at him? So had those who tried to reconcile belief and practice through nineteen hundred years argued in the past. So their descendants argued to-day. And so the world locked in mad battle; for the courts had broken down, were nonexistent, and the soldiery's very presence, speaking as it did of another hope buried, aroused the passions of the masses. Heaven had descended upon the world and stayed there nineteen days; Hell now took its place, — to remain. Only Jane Anstell and Tom Barnett were articulate in saying that hell would not remain.

Speeding toward Harlesstown, on a train only an hour or so later than the special which carried the Anstells, Jane and Barnett fought for the mastery of the world. They fought with no physical weapons; they used no speech; together they held, in silence, a belief which had been powerful enough, only yesterday, to conquer the world. Could all its potency have left it? Was the

truth less the truth to-day than it was yesterday? They would not grant the Satanic argument.

And slowly hope revived in the heart of Jane Maynard. She might lose the battle which she was speeding to wage. She might not win Michael Anstell to the way of decency; she might not win any one in the world save Tom Barnett. And yet — it was the truth nevertheless. Her neighbor *was* perfect. Even though she and Tom Barnett could not accept that truth in such a fashion that they could live according to its dictates, nevertheless, it was none the less the truth.

Did man make the truth? Or did the truth make itself? What mattered it if a whole world denied it then? The truth still went triumphantly on its way, careless of man's puny acceptance. For the truth was greater than all mankind. Wherefore, it must prevail. And if it did not prevail to-day, there was yet to-morrow.

But for the sake of a torn world, hurled again into chaos, she prayed, she hoped that truth could prevail again to-day. So, sinking back into her chair, her lips moved in prayer.

While, fifty miles ahead of her, Michael Anstell and John, angry that their scheme had been exposed, not understanding that such a lie as theirs could not endure unsuspected, that in the very nature of things it had to be exposed, nevertheless were not downcast. Michael Anstell had talked with a score of his lieutenants before leaving the city. They had been shocked, dazed, at the collapse of the New Era. But now that it had collapsed, they looked upon its passing as inevitable. It had been an Utopian dream. They did not condemn Michael Anstell. For greed was in the hearts of men again, and Michael Anstell was the one man in the world who could satisfy greed. He owned the world. And so governors and legislators and judges were called into

action to prevent the world from going mad. For the world deemed, again, that only by violence could violence be checked. Of course, it was too bad that the Millennium had gone, but this was a practical world. Practical matters must be met in a practical way. And, after all, Michael Anstell had not done anything really wrong. He had wished to better the world. So his sycophants argued. But the commonalty of the world, in whose hearts lay the ashes of hope, knew that he had committed the most grievous wrong in all history. For the world now knew that until every last soul was ready for the Millennium, the Millennium must be deferred. For Christ can reign only over willing subjects. Michael Anstell had been unwilling. So he was hated. And he sneered as he talked to his son. How could he know that before this day was ended he, too, would have accepted the Great Plan, and find too late that in gaining a world he had succeeded only in damning himself?

For what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

CHAPTER XXXIV

THERE was no heralding of the coming of Michael Anstell's special train to Harlesstown. He, who during the last nineteen days had been hailed wherever he went as one of the great deliverers of mankind, who had been accorded a trust and a power greater than any modern potentate had attained, and who had been granted an affection that surpassed belief, slipped into the factory town like a fugitive criminal.

It was through no impulse that he came here. Harlesstown was the most perfectly organized community, industrially speaking, in the country. Labor stood firmly and proudly for its rights here. Capital stood firmly—and with equal pride—for its rights. Before the New Era had come, Harlesstown had agreed upon a working compromise, a truce acceptable to both sides in the age-old dispute. And that Harlesstown should be the most violent of all American communities in its denunciation of Michael Anstell meant much.

Labor, of late years, had been taking its cue from Harlesstown. So had capital. Here had been inaugurated reforms, new methods of production, new measures whereby understanding between the two great forces that comprehended modern society might be effected.

Harlesstown had accepted the Day of Faith more joyously, perhaps, than any other town in the world. To Harlesstown it meant the end of struggle, that desperate struggle for bread which has racked the world since its inception.

So Harlesstown, corrupted by that subtle doubt which

in an hour had lost its subtlety and become definite, crude, brutal, seemed to Michael Anstell the one battle ground of importance. The police, hastily reorganized, the soldiery, summoned into action, could control the great cities, the ordinary towns. But Harlesstown was a place where laborers had starved rather than accept what they felt to be injustice. Harlesstown was a place where all the forces of the law, civil and military, had failed to quell the agitator's voice, the sullen cry of labor. If that had happened in the past, what would happen to-day?

For he could not believe that the world had pitched down into the tossing debacle. His destiny was too manifest a thing for him to permit a doubt as to its fulfilment on the lines on which he had conceived it.

When he had proposed and planned the Day of Faith, he had had no idea that its effect would be so tremendous, so colossal, as had happened. He had believed that the world, athirst for hope, was in a mood of spiritual despondency from which it would arouse itself if properly urged. He had believed that it would accept the new faith as it had accepted other faiths, would be lulled into a certain complacency which would render it his easy victim.

That it would surrender, body, mind and soul, to the New Era had not been guessed by him. But when he had seen its tremendous surrender, his purpose had not failed. The great yielding but made his conquest easier. And now that the world had begun to toss overboard the thing that had saved it from storm, Michael Anstell could not believe the evidence of his eyes and ears.

Yet, even if a meek surrender to his will was lost to him, he had so cunningly enchained the world that he could hold what he had seized. Unless, of course, some sort of revolution were instituted. He did not believe such a thing possible. He had told his son of its im-

possibility. Nevertheless, a wise man considers everything, and Michael Anstell considered himself wise. He did not know that he was that fool who had said in his heart there was no God.

By coming to Harlesstown and meeting the labor leaders, by addressing the roused citizenry, he could achieve an understanding and save what he had gained.

This had been his idea. An hysterical New York mob meant little to him. New York was the most emotional city in the world and swayed from height to depth as any chance thought impelled it. New York and the great capitals could be won back. Harlesstown was important now.

He had wired his representatives of his coming and had expected them to arrange such a reception as would overawe the community. So he was surprised when his special train was stopped a few miles outside the town and the presidents of five of the biggest factories in the town boarded his car.

They were men to whom business had been as a deity. Until the coming of the Day of Faith. Then they had accepted, had been made anew, like the rest of the world. The debacle had come; they had reverted to type, as all the world must do. They were business men again, subservient to Michael Anstell. They greeted him deprecatingly. One of them voiced the sentiments of all when he said, in response to a question of Michael Anstell:

"Condemn you? Certainly not, Mr. Anstell. You had a great idea, and the world is better for it. Of course, it would have been wonderful if it had continued, but — after all, we're all human beings. If a lot of agitators hadn't expected the impossible, then demanded it — but it's too late now, Mr. Anstell. We stopped your train because it would be unsafe for you to enter Harlesstown until the way has been prepared."

"Unsafe?" demanded Anstell incredulously. "Aren't there police in Harlesstown?"

The spokesman nodded. "But only a few, and — to tell you the truth, Mr. Anstell, Harlesstown took the Day of Faith more seriously, perhaps, than any other place. When it was first proposed, Harlesstown leaped at the idea. Men had so long preached justice here that men believed justice and kindness were possible. Now that Harlesstown has learned that, well," he coughed in embarrassment, "that you were animated by the desire to — er —"

"To reorganize the world on a business basis, to assure to the strong the fruits of their strength, to make labor safe by rendering capital impervious to any assault. I suppose that's wrong, eh?" snapped Anstell.

"Not at all," said the spokesman. "Only — Harlesstown didn't know that was the idea and — like the rest of the world — is upset. It would not be safe for you to make a public entry into the town, Mr. Anstell. But we are working on the men. By night, perhaps, they will be in a mood to listen —"

So the Anstells left the train and entered closed motor-cars, which took them to a hotel in the town, where, lest the presence of many factory officials arouse suspicion, they were left alone. Outside they could see, through the none-too-clean windows of their room, the milling crowds, could hear hoarse roars of rage, could see the soap-box orator lift his head above the throng and for a moment hold its wandering attention.

An hour after their arrival they heard the name of Jane Maynard cried aloud. A bellboy, somewhat contemptuous of these two men who feared the crowd, yet bribed to secrecy, went outside and made inquiry for them. The crowd was already leaving the square before the hotel, running in the direction of the railroad station. The

boy, returning, told them that Jane Maynard had arrived in Harlesstown, that she would make a speech in the square, that her reception had been both warm and cold. Part of the crowd cheered her, and the rest had been stonily silent.

From their hiding place behind the curtains of the window, the Anstells watched the throngs surge again into the square, saw finally Jane Maynard, accompanied by Tom Barnett, ride in a slowly moving motor-car to the square's center. There the machine halted, and silence descended upon the multitude.

The girl rose in the tonneau of the machine. To John Anstell, staring hungrily at her, she had never been so beautiful, so lovely, so altogether desirable as in this moment when she fought for the faith that was in her, for the safety, for the spirit of mankind.

Save for those impromptu addresses which had been forced upon her since the establishment of the Foundation, Jane had never made a speech in public; she had no training for it. Yet there was no trace of nervousness in her manner as now she made the supreme effort of her life. Calm, almost assured, her great dignity stilled the crowd. Her lips opened, and in the farthest corner of the crowded square, in the hotel room where Michael Anstell and his son crouched, her words were audible.

"My neighbor is perfect."

Into the faces of the inflamed, maddened mob she hurled the challenge. And from those twisted lips came a response. But it was not the response of twenty days ago. Instead, a sullen roar came from the crowd, sneering, menacing, hate-filled. A man climbed upon a fire hydrant, supporting himself by gripping the shoulders of those about him. A roar of greeting came from the crowd; it died away as he lifted his hand.

"Miss Maynard," he cried.

The girl turned toward him.

"I suppose," he cried, "that goes for Michael Anstell!"

"Why not?" Crisp, cool and challenging her answer came.

"Why not?" he echoed. "Do you mean to tell us that you believe in him, the man who financed you to seize the world, to grind the toiler down as he never was ground down before? Do you believe in him?"

"And if I do?" she asked.

"If you do," and his voice broke in his wrath, "then you never ought to have left that insane asylum that you came from!"

That was all. From the mob arose a mighty roar of approbation. She had hurled her challenge, and it had been picked up and hurled back. She had fought for the mastery of the world, fought on the side of decency and goodness, and evil was again triumphant.

That roar of approbation smashed against the ears of John Anstell. Torn by emotions which he could not quite comprehend, he had watched Jane, had listened to her affirmation. Suddenly he knew. *He* should have been by her side, not Tom Barnett. *He* should have been voicing the faith which he had deserted, which he had used as a means of satisfying his own greed. For she was lovely; ah, lovelier now in the moment when he knew that she was lost to him than ever she could have been had he won her. Lost to him! He knew it, knew it as definitely as he knew that he and his father had betrayed the world.

Oh, if when his first doubt had arisen, he had conquered it, had stood, not by his father in the Great Betrayal, but by mankind, by Jane, in the Great Victory! He had not; she had been lost to him then, though neither she nor he had known it!

Lost to him! That lovely body, that incomparable

face, that matchless spirit to belong to another! He felt withered, shrunken, crushed in the sudden certainty. What were millions, billions, power? What was anything in the world as compared with Jane Maynard?

And they were crying out their approbation of the man who hurled defiance at her. His brain seemed on fire; he did not read the good humor in the mob's tones. He did not know that always, forever in the hearts of men, Jane Maynard would be marked for esteem and love. They might, in this moment, heartlessly cheer the man who insulted her. But even now they would have slain the man who tried to harm her. The orator on the hydrant had been crudely, vulgarly witty, and his wit brought approval, mirth. For it was mirth, not menace, in the mob's voice.

But maddened by his own self-contempt, by the further sense of his irreparable loss, John Anstell misread the mob. He thought that the sudden surge of thousands of bodies portended violence to her. And so, because there was no cowardice in his soul, he ran to aid her. Before his father could raise his warning voice, John Anstell was out of the room. A moment later Michael Anstell saw him on the sidewalk, saw him pushing his way toward the middle of the square.

Then — recognition! And from the mob's many-tongued throat came a roar of hate. Hate for the son of the man who had robbed them of the thing for which the world had vainly striven since its creation; hate for the man who had balked them of their great desire, the desire which they could not again achieve, which they had barely comprehended in the moment of achievement, but which, like the dimmed joys of infancy, would loom larger, seem sweeter, because of memory's mortality.

From the motor-car where she stood, tears in her eyes, unuttered sobs swelling her throat, Jane saw him. She

saw the mob seize him, lift him on high, about to rend him.

Her voice rose in a shriek of agony. The hands that tore at John Anstell's clothing fell away from him. But it was too late. The body that they dropped upon the pavement no longer stirred with life. That one rush of the mob had crushed the spirit from the body. Jane saw and understood. She had not been for John Anstell; that she had known since last night. Yet she had given her lips to him, had thought, in that great loneliness which had possessed her when first she started the Foundation, that she had loved him. She knew better now; but he had, in his way, loved her, and she had thought that she loved him. And so, her heart breaking, she swayed, blinded, horror-stricken. Tom Barnett, a giant despite his crippled knee, took her in his arms. Insane with fear for her, he fought his way through the crowd, maddened with horror for the thing that it had done, bore her into the hotel.

Into the hotel where Michael Anstell crouched behind the curtain, a witness of the tragedy that not all his money, not all his greed, not all his power could prevent. His son! The son for whom he had planned so greatly and so evilly! His son, whom he had debauched, made partner in the dreadful onslaught against the faith of the world! His son!

He saw hands that were suddenly gentle lift the bruised body, bear it, after Jane Maynard, toward that room wherein he crouched, a victim to the most dreadful remorse that man has known since Judas fled the companionship of his own soul.

Then, suddenly, Michael Anstell understood. His son had gone to save Jane Maynard, had in the last moment of life expiated, so far as might be, the sin that was his. He had died for Jane Maynard. Through his mind ran

the great truth: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Greater love. Love! What was this thing called love? What was it? What had he done to it? He turned from the window and started for the door, to run out and claim the body of his son, careless that the same fate might await him. He took one stride forward, then stopped. His eyes, fastened upon a picture on the wall, widened, were suddenly pitiful.

For there upon the wall, in a dingy frame, poorly executed, the cheap glass that covered it none too clean, was a reproduction of a famous painting. A painting of the Christ!

Love! He knew at last what it was. This picture on the wall of the dingy hotel room, hung there by some loving hand that humbly tried to do good, this picture told him. For the cheap glass and the poor reproduction could not dim the glory of the painted eyes. Painted, but real, as truth must ever be.

Love! This was what love was; it was Christ himself. And He had died to prove its virtue, to prove its infallibility, to prove its rigid iron law, the law that said that by no other means might man be saved.

Then if this was Christ, here in the room, what was he, Michael Anstell? Michael Anstell, who had sneered at the gospel of love and practiced a gospel of hate! Michael Anstell, who had brought a mock millennium into the world, in order that he might profit thereby! Michael Anstell, who by desiring his neighbor's goods had proved that he hated his neighbor, who therefore stood for hate.

Anti-Christ! Christ had been in this room, had been in every room in the world, and in the streets, the fields, the hills and lakes and valleys. But Anti-Christ, His great enemy, had also been there, and he, Michael Anstell, had been Anti-Christ.

Anti-Christ had won. He knew that. He knew that the Hendricks creed had failed to rule the world; at this very moment the world had rejected the Great Affirmation, had sunk back into the cauldron of hate and despair in which the Bloody Years had left it.

Anti-Christ had won. He had hurled love from its enthroned pedestal and substituted therefor the ugly false idol of hate.

Anti-Christ had won! His brain staggered at the thought. No, it had not won; it could not win. Because he, Michael Anstell, who had been Anti-Christ, was no longer that dreadful thing. Why, he had been blind, mad, insane! Incredibly wicked, vile beyond imagination! His great dream, to conquer the world on a greater scale than Mahomet had done, had failed. But Mahomet had been a sincere man. He had thought himself a prophet, and millions believed that he was. He had conquered the world for goodness, he believed. Michael Anstell had attempted its conquest for evil — and had failed.

Failed? Of course he had failed. Even had the world continued to be his dupe, he would have failed. For the truth must conquer every one, sooner or later. Michael Anstell's submission to the truth had been deferred until the rest of the world had submitted and denied submission. But defeat must inevitably come to all who encounter the truth. It came to Michael Anstell now. When a broken world staggered back to its torture, Michael Anstell knew the truth.

Before its mighty recognition he staggered, fell, his hands reaching out to the portrait on the wall. His neighbor was perfect. Of course he was! Oh, God, why had he denied it? The concentrated will of a billion people had overshot Michael Anstell twenty days ago; but its force could never die, though men might forget.

It would live — eternally. It struck Michael Anstell now. He knew! Too late!

Great was the tragedy upon the Cross; so great that it overshadows all others. And yet there must have been another tragedy. The remorse of Judas must also have shaken the world.

CHAPTER XXXV

INTO the room where Michael Anstell stared at the poorly painted portrait of the Christ, rendering at last that obeisance to truth which all mankind must sooner or later render, they bore the body of his son. They laid it down upon the bed and softly they withdrew, leaving the broken old man alone with his dead.

And what was ambition in the presence of death? The paths of glory. — He, Michael Anstell, must live and know what he had done. His son had redeemed himself in that final gallant moment. For him that peace that passeth understanding; but for Michael Anstell the companionship of his own soul, the hatred of mankind.

Into the room, later, came Jane. From the bedside of his son she led the old man. In her eyes was infinite pity, and in her touch only gentleness, and before that spirit of hers Michael Anstell made his final surrender.

The tears had gone from his eyes, and the trembling departed from his limbs. He was, to outward appearance, that same Michael Anstell who had duped the world, made it for twenty days his slave. For Michael Anstell was strong. None but the strongest could have planned and executed the thing which he had done.

“Miss Maynard,” he said, “you know what I’ve done.”

She nodded an assent. Behind her, staring at the two, Tom Barnett’s body stiffened. Michael Anstell had duped her once. Could he, playing upon her gentleness of soul, dupe her again? Not while Tom Barnett lived!

“Yet,” said Michael Anstell, “what man has done, man can do.”

"What do you mean?" demanded Jane.

"I mean this," said Michael Anstell. "I mean that I believe. I mean that we're going to start all over again, you, and I, and our young friend here." He nodded toward Barnett.

"Start all over again?" asked Jane.

"With every dollar that I have in the world behind you," said Anstell impressively.

"Why?" she asked.

"Why? Because, Miss Maynard, I've come to understanding. I've seen what the world could be; I know what it is to-day. I'm going to put it back where it was yesterday."

"How?" she asked.

"As we did before; with money and propaganda. How else?"

She shrugged. "Ah, how else? But do you think that it can be done again?"

He stared at her. There was absolute confidence in his voice as he answered:

"Of course I do. Don't you?"

She shook her head.

"Then you don't believe that your neighbor is perfect?" demanded Anstell.

"I do," she answered. "And only in that belief can the world be saved from self-destruction."

"Then you'll work with me," cried Anstell. "We'll prove that what the world has had the world can have again."

But again she shook her head. "Not you and I together, Mr. Anstell. You in your way, and I in mine, perhaps ——"

"Why not together?" he demanded.

She laughed, the weary laugh of the understanding when it tries to make the non-understanding comprehend.

"Can you wait twenty centuries, Michael Anstell?" she asked.

He stared at her, bewildered. "I don't know what you mean," he told her.

"Of course you don't," she said. Into her voice crept bitterness. "You, who have destroyed the thing that took twenty centuries to accomplish ——"

"Twenty centuries! We did it in a few months," he protested.

"*We* did it? Whom do you mean?" she cried.

"You — and I," he answered.

Slowly she shook her head; before that gesture Michael Anstell felt infinitely ignorant, infinitely small.

"What had you and I to do with it?" she demanded.

"Well," he gasped, "wasn't it your idea? Didn't I back it with money and publicity and ——"

"Money? Publicity! And what about twenty centuries of teaching, of preparation? Oh, Michael Anstell, you have been not only wicked; you have been ignorant."

"Ignorant?" he gasped. "I grant that I was wicked, and that I was ignorant in so far as I did not understand what true success was, but ——"

"Ignorant," she repeated. "You dare to think that you and I remade the world. The world remade itself, Michael Anstell. The aspirations of more than nineteen hundred years brought about that remaking. The hope, the faith, the will of sixty generations remade the world. You and I were nothing but weak instruments. The truth was always in the world, in the great teachings of the past, for the world to recognize when it chose. Perhaps we aided in the recognition, but — that was all. For what have we done that was not done nineteen hundred years ago?"

"Organization," he said. "We gave the Plan that. We will do it again and ——"

"And damn it again," she interrupted. "Oh, Michael Anstell, it has been written for the world to read, that it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. What do you think that means, Michael Anstell?"

"That it is wrong to be rich? But I will dedicate all my millions to the cause; I will ——"

"You must first seek understanding," she told him. "Wrong to be rich? Then it is wrong to be poor. Do you think that God cares about motor-cars or their lack? About palaces or hovels? It is the heart of man that He judges. I will tell you, Michael Anstell, what that warning means. It means that salvation is not to be purchased, and that the rich man, purchasing the things of earth, may perhaps think it easy to purchase the things of Heaven, and they are not for sale.

"Oh, you are not the only one who has done wrong, Michael Anstell. When I listened to you, I knew that I listened to the voice of evil." She turned to Barnett. "You knew it, too, but we both forgot the voice that we had heard. I could not wait. Yet the world had waited nineteen hundred years, and it was better, though I did not know it then, that it wait centuries more rather than accept a bought millennium.

"Michael Anstell, there was a millennium upon us, was there not? But don't you suppose that there have been other apparent millenniums? Don't you suppose that faith has been so strongly in the heart of mankind, in these past nineteen centuries, that millenniums have begun, been destroyed and *forgotten*?"

"Forgotten? How could that be?" he asked.

"How could it not be? Hasn't the world to-day forgotten last week? It if had not forgotten, could it have surrendered the thing it had? Oh, I know that it still re-

members certain things. But already it is saying that the thing failed because it wasn't practical. It failed, the world is saying, because it wasn't humanly possible for man to love his neighbor all the time. Forgotten! Another generation will read a legend.

"Millenniums begun, destroyed, forgotten! Why, Michael Anstell? You have read the Bible. Do you remember when Christ entered the temple and scourged the money-changers? Was it because they were rich, do you think? Was it merely because they trafficked in the shadow of the altar? Or was it perhaps because they not merely carried on business in the temple, but because the temple had become a thing of business itself? Think on that, Michael Anstell.

"And when you have thought, ask yourself if it is not possible that millenniums have begun, been destroyed and forgotten? Why, with the truth preached from a million pulpits, does the truth not prevail? Is it because those pulpits no longer rely on the truth to uphold them, but prefer to rely on organization?

"Organized truth! Organized love! How can these things, eternal things, be subjected to the puny organization of man? Has man lost the sense of value of the difference between the body and its garments, and placed the garments first?

"I let you *buy* a world's salvation, Michael Anstell. Into a thing which should be kept apart from things material, I let the most material thing of all creep in. Money!

"Money and propaganda, you say. You think that brought about the twenty days of Paradise we knew. Yet there has been money and organization before our time, and what has it brought the world? Wars, famines, plagues and destruction.

"There were more people in the world when the Great

War began than ever in its history. There were more churches. Yet the Bloody Years came and took their frightful toll. Did money, did organization prevent that awful tragedy? Can money, can organization prevent other similar and worse tragedies?

"I tell you that they cannot, Michael Anstell. Man cannot rely on the things which he himself creates to lift him from the depths. Man must rely on that which is older than himself—the law of truth, that law which he has always admitted with his lips and denied with his deeds."

"But the world accepted that law on the Day of Faith," cried Michael Anstell.

"Not the world," she answered. "A billion people accepted, but they were not enough. There was one who did not accept; you, Michael Anstell. I do not condemn you. For the fault was mine. I permitted a salvation to be purchased, not realizing then, as I do now, as all men must know, that until the world is ready, to the last soul in it, salvation cannot come.

"You, Michael Anstell, merely proved the law: that truth must be accepted by every one before the world can be permanently remade. To buy salvation, acceptance of the truth, is no better than to force it upon people at the cannon's mouth. As long as there is one single soul in the world who does not believe, the Millennium is not here."

"But now I do believe," said Anstell.

"And a billion others have ceased to believe," she answered sadly. "But do not condemn yourself too greatly, Michael Anstell. It was a purchased thing, this universal faith. It was not founded on the rock of acceptance of the truth. Even had you believed, it might not have endured. For we did it with money, and for more than nineteen centuries the world had been trying with money and organization to remake itself. How should

we have endured where the world had failed so many times before? And yet — ”

“ How can I *know* that? ” cried Anstell. “ The world had something. How can I *know* that it would not have been eternal? Save for me? ”

She looked at him. Sad was her voice as she answered: “ You cannot know, Michael Anstell.”

So long as he lived, Michael Anstell would remember these, her final words to him. The world had had something, something so infinitely precious that it had been beyond comprehension, even when it was visible to the physical as well as the spiritual eyes of man. How could Michael Anstell know that it would not have endured for the thousand years of Christ’s reign on earth that has been promised mankind?

Though Jane Maynard believed that the purchased thing could not endure, how could Anstell know that she was right? Until death should release him from the world which he had wrecked, should remove him from the contempt of mankind, Michael Anstell would wonder. Not all the benefactions which he might make to charity; not all the penitence he might feel; nothing would save him from the iteration of that question. It would ring in his ears until the end of life. Slowly he walked back to that room where lay his son. The question was already sounding in his ears.

Alone Jane and Tom Barnett looked at each other. She had failed. She had attempted to bring into the world the thing which, she believed, was all that mankind needed to make this earth a Paradise. It had come for twenty days, then gone.

“ Do you think, ” said Barnett, “ that you were entirely right in refusing Anstell? If he is sincere now, perhaps — ”

She shook her head. “ The world was ready three

weeks ago. It had been through the most terrific tragedy of the ages. But to-day — Tom, if a million infants were put in one great room, tiny infants able only to crawl, when would they walk? ”

“ When they were able,” he replied.

“ And they would be able,” she retorted, “ when they wanted to badly enough.”

“ They could be taught,” he objected.

She shook her head. “ I have never seen one taught. It learns, perhaps, from example, but it cannot be hurried. It is written down before its birth that that baby will walk upon a certain day, and not before. And that day comes when its desire is stronger than its fear of the consequences of attempting to stand upright.

“ So it is with the world, with all of us children. Like the babies, we watch others jealously. Some of us are emboldened by their example to do as they do. Example and precept. That is all. Force and purchase — never. Can you force an infant to walk before its desires have strengthened its limbs? Can you *buy* its walking ability? You know that you can’t.

“ Nor can we buy for the world that which is within its grasp, which it had only yesterday. Until the world wants it so badly that it takes it — until every last soul in the world holds the same desire — not until then will the real millennium come. Meantime — we can hope. We can hope for the day when the world realizes that the millennium it had yesterday it always has, within its reach, waiting to be seized and rendered to the uses of mankind.

“ We can preach it, Tom. But we shall not buy it, for it cannot be bought.”

Then, suddenly, a silence fell upon them, a silence in which no speech was needed to convey from one heart to the other the thing that was in each. She went to his

suddenly opened arms as unconsciously, as naturally, as she breathed. A moment, gently, with a great tenderness, he held her close. Then her head went back and her lips went up to his.

Yet even as they kissed, through both their minds went the same question. Suppose that Michael Anstell had been honest, sincere? Would it have continued, this millennium, indefinitely? The question would not torture them as it would Anstell. But it would puzzle them always. Would it have lasted?

But neither they, nor Michael Anstell, nor any one else in the world could answer that question. Only all the world together could give the answer, and some day —— For neither hope nor truth are ever permanently lost. They are somewhere, biding their time. If a man can love his neighbor for one minute, why cannot he do so for eternity?

THE END

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